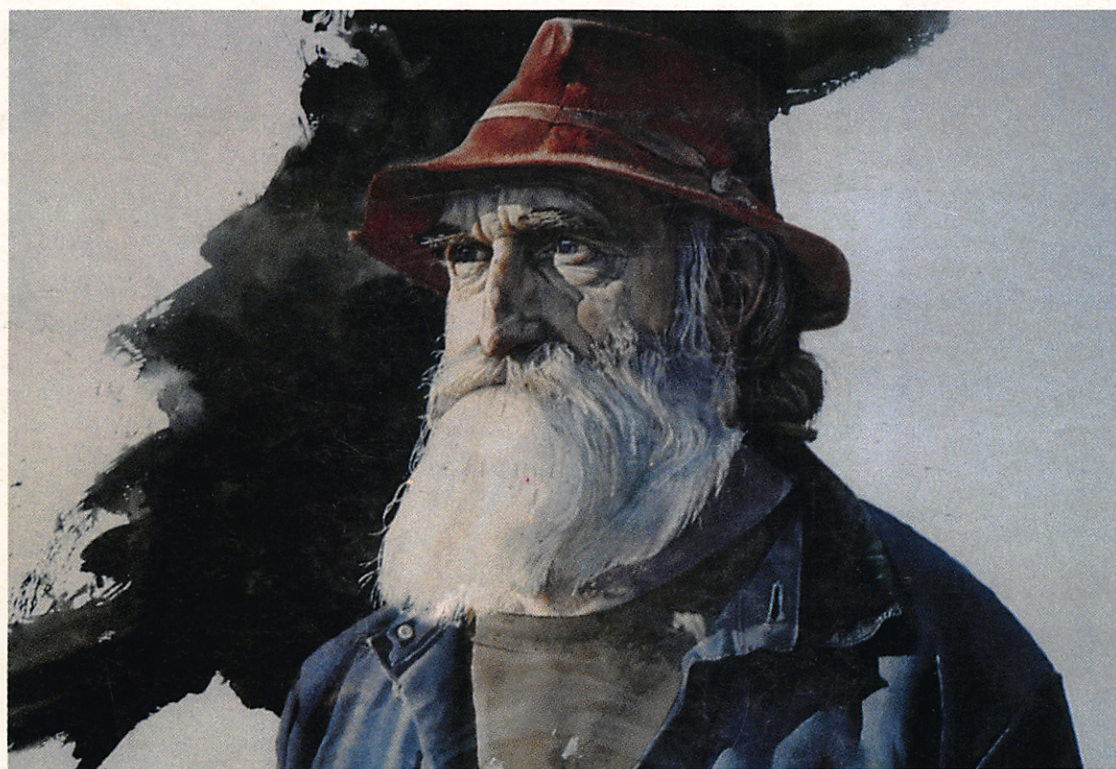


Bitter Sweet

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Vol. Seven, No. Six

June, 1984



"Twigsnapper" by Ronal Parlin

New Vineyard Artist Ronal Parlin
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's Rural Childhood
Parsonsfield Seminary
Conway, New Hampshire's Bali Szabo
South Windham Artist Betsy Hanscom



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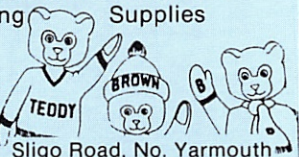
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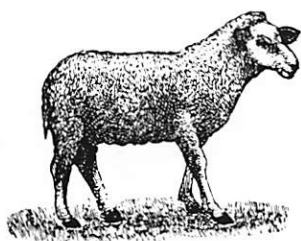
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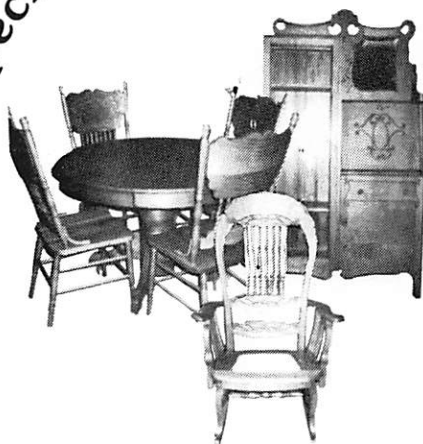
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At left, the parlor of the Wadsworth farm, Hiram—a childhood home of poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



Bitter Sweet Views

ON BEING ALIVE!

We try to watch our grammar here, because there's no point in setting a bad example. And clear punctuation makes the difference between readable and muddled.

Thank goodness, I have parents who, among other things, refused to allow "Can I?" when "May I?" was correct. That was good training; I do the same thing to my children and students now.

"Can I get a drink?" they ask. "I don't know, can you?" I answer (as have millions of mothers before me); and "May I?" they say, ruefully getting the message. It's a good message. The theory is still sound: *Why* sink to the lowest level of everyday conversation?

I'm sure you remember the teachers who taught us to diagram sentences for months and years—something which

people generally believe has gone "by the board." It's not so—diagramming is still being taught in New England.

Oh, we at *BitterSweet* still err on the side of colloquialism and I can split an infinitive with the worst of them. Still, we have prepared some writers' guidelines recently. Prospective authors may write for them to see which approaches we prefer. We are somewhere between super-scholar literary and pared-down journalistic—rather at the level of *educated human being*, I suppose.

I admit that the music of the English language—its flow, rhythm, *sound*—is very important to me. James Herriott's books always delight, and the recurring favorite reading piece has to be Dylan Thomas' very Welsh *Under Milk Wood*. But our own dialect writers such as Sarah Orne Jewett, Gladys Hasty Carroll (see page 9 of this issue) and coastal novelist Elisabeth Ogilvie capture New England's salty tang. Our elder poets, like Robert Peter Tristram Coffin, Robert Frost and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (his childhood parlor is shown above and he's on page 17) had a memorably resounding quality to their

written word. A new Portland poet, Rick Crockett (page 12) takes a modern approach to effusive thought couched in clipped American phrases. There's room for both approaches.

Loyal contributor Jack Barnes received a cryptic note the other day, accusing him of "making fun" of Yankee dialect, and asking him if he was "from outside." "Well," said Maine native Barnes, "we *did* have outside plumbing!"

That statement brings to my mind the lecture I was once given by an elitist writer: "*Never* use exclamation points," the scribe said. Frankly, that astonished me. Where I grew up, an exclamation point was a mark of punctuation, as legitimate as any other, and absolutely essential to accentuate the exciting.

Of course, that's not to say the exclamation point is not overused. "Do we really *need* twelve exclamation points in one story?" proofreader Sara Gallant noted last month. Of course we didn't; two would suffice in that case.

It's a sad fact of modern life that we often become jaded. Nothing is too shocking anymore—we've seen it all.

Page 28 . . .

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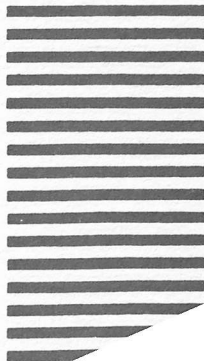
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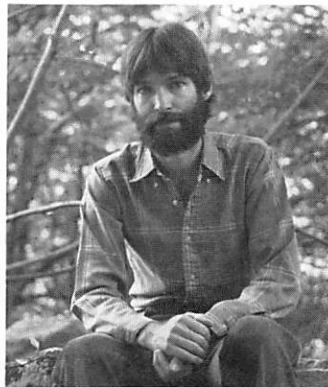
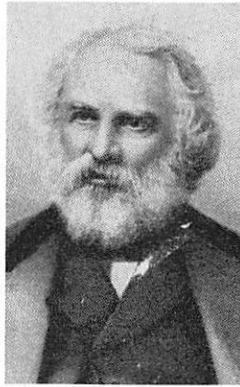
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Ayah

letters to the editor

MIXED REVIEWS

We have really enjoyed your magazine! Small-medium-large, expensive paper or not, the articles are what the magazine is all about and we wouldn't have minded if they were mimeographed on newsprint!

*Don & Le Lacombe
Depew, New York*

We did like your magazine and gave several gift subscriptions. The reason that you lost us was because of your terrible price increase. I guess when I pay \$12 for . . . , we don't feel *BitterSweet* is worth \$15! Sorry to see the increase.

*Ruth & Oliver Irish
Harrison, Maine*

Ed. Note: The recent price increase was necessary to begin putting the magazine on a standard business footing. Nobody likes price increases, but sometimes they are absolutely necessary.

In future, we hope to be able to offer occasional discounts, but for the present we must adhere to the \$15 rate. (Less for charter subscribers from 1977.)

H.B.

NORTH COUNTRY?

Congratulations! *BitterSweet* is growing up very handsomely, both in appearance and content.

"Flavor of the North Country," though, puzzles me, for at no time, as a Maine native . . . who later lived away from Maine for some time, and with a career that included six eventful years for Maine Publicity Bureau . . . have I considered or heard anyone else call much of Maine other than beyond Lincoln—the Katahdin area and Allagash—North Country. And in New Hampshire, one only refers to the area—largely Coos County—beyond the White Mts. as North Country.

Then, examining the April table of contents Cross Roads, it is hardly representative of North Country. Kennebunkporters will be surprised and no one I know in the Conway area thinks of themselves as residing in

North Country. If one reads the N.H. papers regularly, one is very aware of the ongoing disagreements between the area south of the mountains and that beyond known as North Country—the matter of roads brings this up all the time. I have been a social worker in past in both southern New Hampshire and northern New Hampshire; and owned family land, as did my grandfather and great-grandfather in N.H. North Country, and in western Maine, which is what I regard as the area from Fryeburg to Rangeley and Farmington.

My friends in other States consider they are coming Down East, regardless of where they head in Maine.

I doubt very much that Stephen Etnier feels he has lived and painted in North Country. It is delightful to find his paintings in *BitterSweet* and I am pleased that Martin Dibner proposes a major retrospective. I recall many of Etnier's early paintings with great pleasure—I really was stunned to find these in *BitterSweet*, and frankly think you have stolen a real march on *Down East*!

I have known Jim Hamlin since the '40's and admired his work, his devotion to Bridgton and Bridgton Academy—and he lives in North Bridgton, one of my lifelong favorite villages, but never have I considered it North Country! Any more than I have Waterford, home of so many Hamlins, and also of my Hale and Kimball ancestors.

While this issue is full of material familiar to me and enjoyed, I cannot regard Monmouth as a place where I would find North Country Flavor. And on one of our few recent springlike mornings on my way to see Jack Barnes' cousin, my doctor of twenty years, Lowell Barnes, in Hiram, I detoured to enjoy the view from Tear Cap Road; it surely did not ever make me think I was in the north, but rather very pleasant southwestern Maine and Down East . . .

*Elizabeth Mason Carter
West Bethel, Maine*

Ed. Note: Geographically and traditionally, of course, Mrs. Carter is exactly right. However, since *BitterSweet* is no longer looking at just western Maine; and since it

cannot, for obvious reasons, call itself the magazine of "Down East Flavor," we have to consider where we want to identify our roots for the rest of the country. If you are sitting in New York or California or Indiana and looking at the origin of *BitterSweet*'s material, we think "northcountry" says more about our state of mind than anything else.

N.M.

A NEW MARCH

Congratulations on the fine presentation of poetry in your super March issue! You lifted it from the lowly position of filler to one peer with its literary counterparts!

Applause! Applause!
Encore!

*Mary R. Palmer
South Paris*

Just had to write and let you know how much I like the "new" *BitterSweet*. The photography is outstanding, poetry for winter-weary eyes.

Glad to see Jack Barnes hasn't lost his sense of humor. Until I read his last column I didn't think of Tab as a cure for cabin fever. "Notes from Brookfield Farm" have gotten me through the winter so far—maybe Tab can get me through March. Hope I like the Tab as well as I like Jack's column.

*Francine Tanguay
Wells Branch, Maine*

SOUTH BERWICK MEETING HOUSE

A while back, your magazine did an article on Gladys Hasty Carroll of South Berwick, writing a very fine article about the community of Emery's Bridge, in South Berwick. It showed with pictures, the Dunnybrook school and the Emery's Bridge Meeting House. The Meeting House is the reason for this note.

This summer, on July 13th, 14th and 15th, we (the Church) will be celebrating the 150th anniversary of this fine old and unique historic building. All who shall read your fine magazine will be freely welcome to attend the many activities should they desire to do so.

*Erik R. Hanson, Minister
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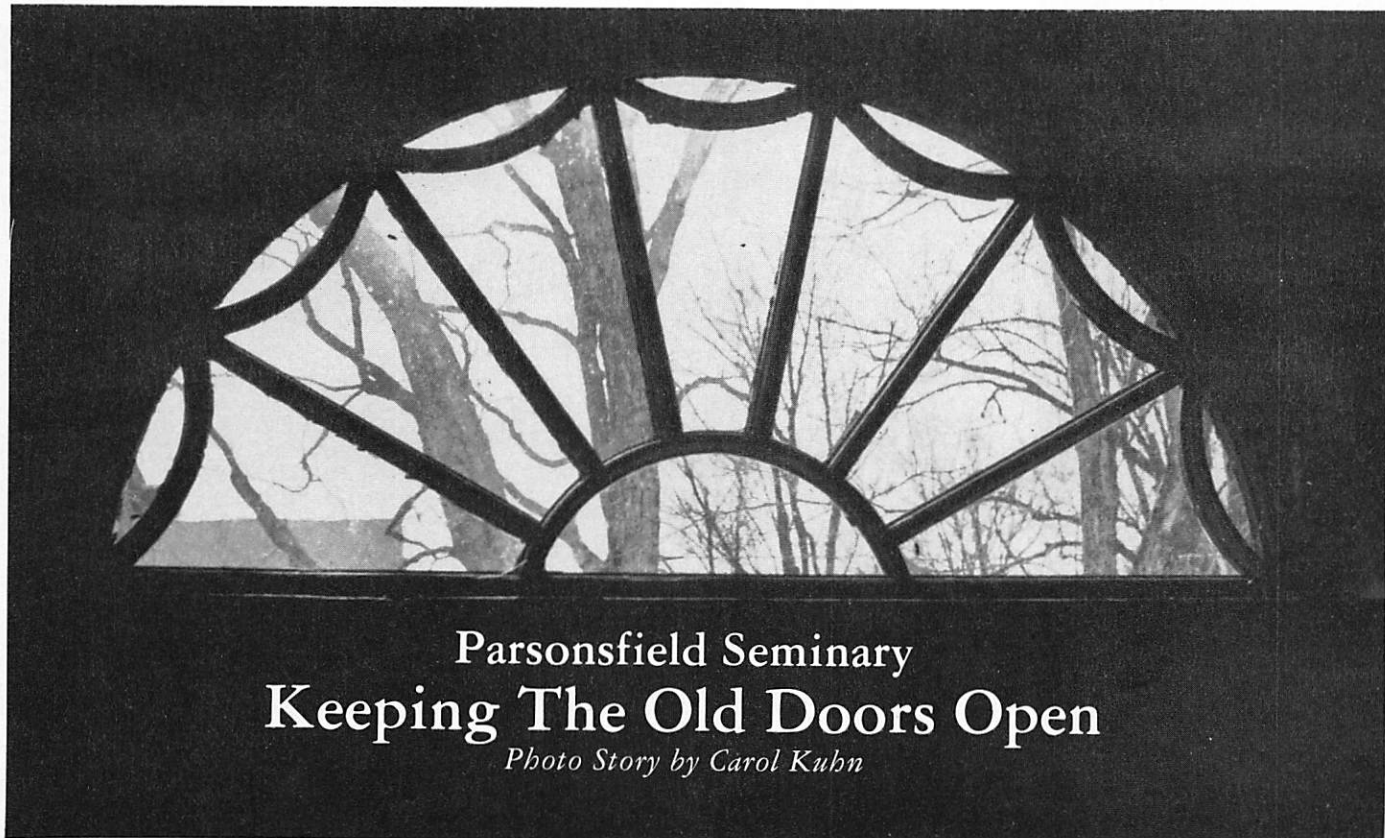
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Parsonsfield Seminary
Keeping The Old Doors Open

Photo Story by Carol Kuhn



PARSONSFIELD SEMINARY

Pride and perseverance are forces deeply ingrained in the history of Parsonsfield Seminary. Located in North Parsonsfield, a rural community a few miles from the New Hampshire/Maine border near the villages of Kezar Falls and Porter, the school was founded in 1832. However, the future of today's six-grade, three-classroom Parsonsfield Consolidated School and the adjacent

unused dormitory building is uncertain.

A strong sense of community spirit was evident at the founding of the school by a group of prominent leaders. A similar sense of loyalty and determination to preserve "Par-Sem," as it is familiarly known, continues today as graduates, parents, students, and the townspeople of Parsonsfield consider the options for the present elementary school and the dormitory which closed its doors as a high school in 1949.



During the summer of 1982 the Parsonsfield Town Club, a support group of local citizens, helped organize a Sesquicentennial Celebration to honor the one hundred and fiftieth birthday of Parsonsfield Seminary. On that day the school and the dormitory parlors and hallways were alive with memories and history. Alumni of the dormitory school and current elementary school children eagerly accompanied visitors around the complex, pointing out the principal's office, the dining hall, and the infamous hole in the plaster wall between the boys' dorm and the girls' dorm. For although the building has been unused thirty-five years, the young Par-Sem students are well versed in the school's history and delight in talking about its founders. A Sesquicentennial Celebration booklet printed in Cornish for the occasion in 1982 supplies a history of Parsonsfield seminary and a record of some of its other celebrations.

When Par-Sem was founded, the population of Parsonsfield was about two thousand. The Seminary was built set back from the Main Street of North Parsonsfield, which was then a busy thoroughfare for freight being moved from New Hampshire to Portland and Boston. Occasional droves of livestock en route to city markets passed, as well as fancy stage coaches carrying passengers. The founders of the school were a group of ministers—including Elder John Buzzell, the first President of the Board of Trustees; a local physician, Dr. Moses Sweat, the Secretary of the Board of Trustees; five local farmers including Major Thomas Churchill; and three lawyers: Robert T. Blazo, Nathan Clifford, and Rufus McIntire.

One hundred and forty students attended the first session of Parsonsfield Seminary high school. At that time the school was closely affiliated with the Free Will Baptist denomination and many of the churches sent their students to Parsonsfield for their education.

Par-Sem may be considered as a pioneer in the field of secondary education. By 1862, thirty years after Par-Sem was founded, there were still less than three hundred and fifty high schools in the United States.

The school's history has been marked a number of times by struggle and uncertainty. But it has also been characterized by fortuitous turning points stemming from the ingenuity and generosity of its community members. The first seminary was destroyed by a fire in 1854 and the existing building, except for the North Wing, was built soon afterwards. The Civil War and its aftermath forced the Trustees to close the school for short intervals during the years 1863-1868.

In 1877, an unexpected gift of money instilled new hope for the school and furthered the promise for its continuance. Elisha Piper, a Parsonsfield woodsman and farmer, bequeathed eleven thousand dollars to the town of Parsonsfield for the maintenance of a "Free High School." And again in 1899, Parsonsfield Seminary's future became more stable when Bartlett Doe, a successful businessman in San Francisco, returned to his home in Parsonsfield for a visit. He became interested in the school and had the old seminary repaired and remodeled. When he died in 1905, a portion of his fortune was added to the Trustee Fund and the townspeople began to show renewed interest in the school.

Par-Sem continued to offer a traditional curriculum, complemented by home economics, simple nursing, and agriculture. Attendance diminished again during World Wars I and II, when the graduating classes then averaged less than five members and the dormitory was occasionally closed. The last high school graduation was in 1949, the year the dormitory and a long chapter of Par-Sem were closed.

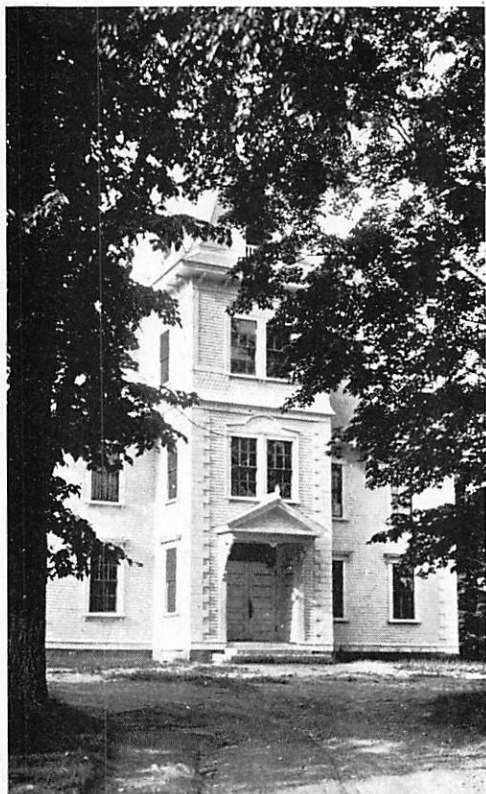
In 1952, the Parsonsfield Consolidated School was founded when the smaller schools were closed in Parsonsfield—a sixty square mile township with a current population of about one thousand. Mrs. Grace Gilpatrick has been the principal and a teacher at Par-Sem Consolidated since 1957. Under her direction (and with the assistance of two other teachers, one aide, and a core of volunteer parents), the school of seventy-four students flourishes as a unique combination of a small, close-knit traditional community school and

one that is innovative, personalized, curriculum-centered.

Today, in the shadows of the stately white-clapboard dormitory and under a canopy of enormous leafy maple trees, children play jump rope and trade baseball cards while talking about both maple sugaring and computer games. Some of them could take you on a well guided tour of the unused Dormitory—lacing their commentary with surnames like Sweat, Piper, Dearborn, Merrill,

and Doe. They have helped Mrs. Gilpatrick clean and sweep the beautifully-panelled dining hall, complete with a dumb waiter and an elegant sideboy. They might giggle at their reflections in the mirrors above the handsome oak mantels and fireplaces and then very solemnly tell you that this was the principal's office or a school master's bedroom. Or they may be able to tell you about the once-impressive and spacious gymnasium built in 1940 in a field below





the school and dormitory, but now probably beyond repair.

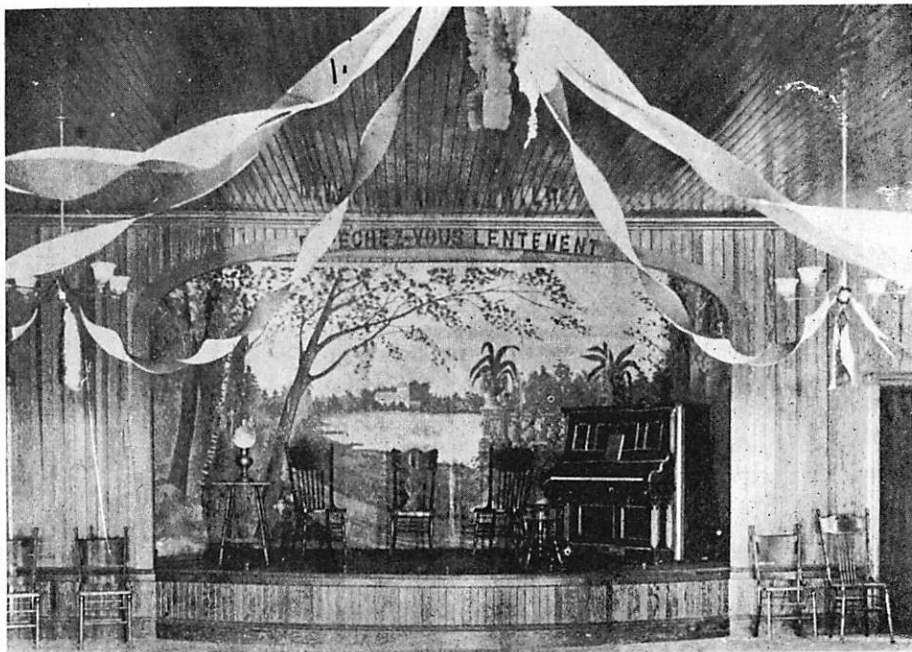
Parsonsfield Seminary's history, inspired by pride and ingenuity, marked by challenge and struggle, is again at a turning point. Many feel the preservation of the large, unused but partially maintained dormitory depends on developing its practical use for the community. The continuation of the elementary school as Par-Sem Consolidated is also under question.

The young "caretakers" of Par-Sem, seen outside playing at recess today, would not strike as sedate a pose as those students in the old photos in the Sesquicentennial booklet. But they would surely inspire the onlooker to hope that the Parsonsfield Seminary community will be reminded of its history, steeped in pride and perseverance, as it faces the current question: how to keep the doors open and the history alive.



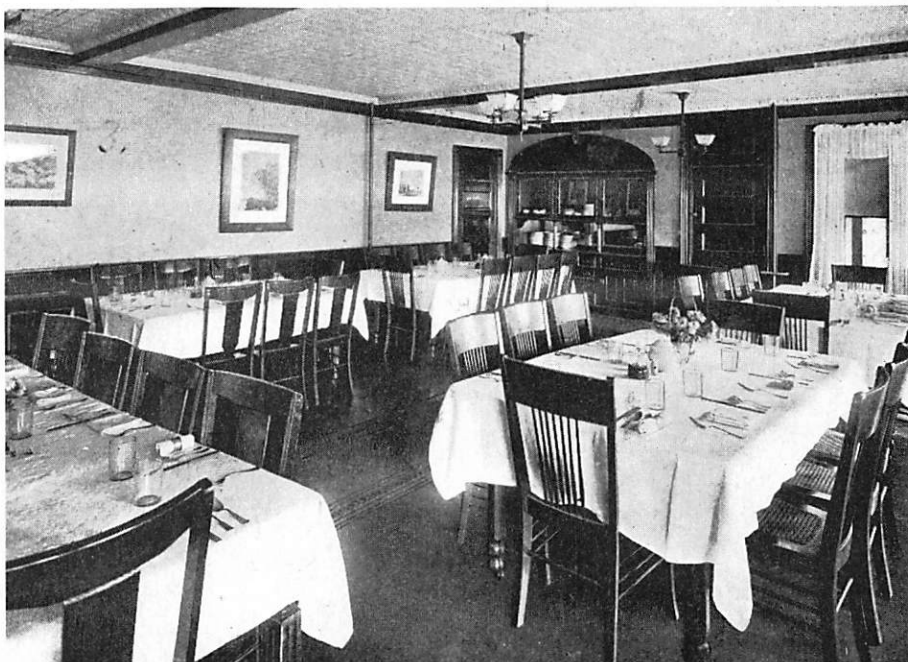
Carol Kuhn

Reference: Parsonsfield Seminary Sesquicentennial (1832-1982) booklet.



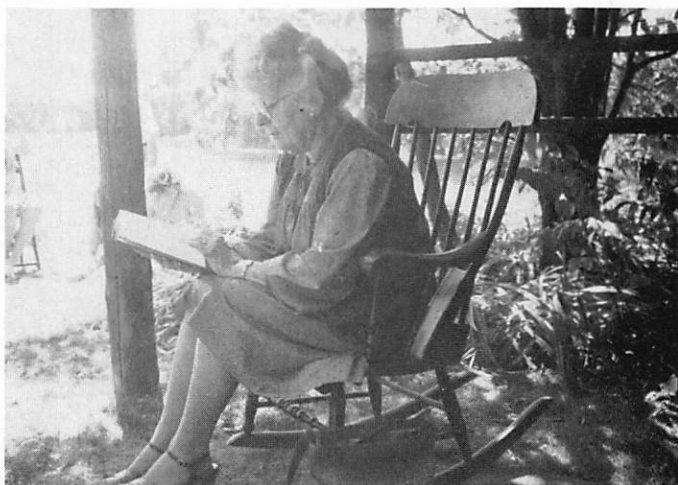
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Gladys Hasty Carroll

KINDRED SPIRITS

Sarah Orne Jewett and Gladys Hasty Carroll

Gladys Hasty Carroll has always looked to Sarah Orne Jewett as an inspiration for her own writing, and between them they have given the people and the town of South Berwick a sense of immortality.

Although each wrote of a different century, since Sarah Orne Jewett died in 1909 when Gladys Hasty Carroll was only four years old, the two have complemented each other in many ways—as the latter so aptly delineated in 1923 when she was a student at Bates College:

"Her world (Jewett's) was the village and coast of Maine. Mine is the inland farms to which she used to ride out with her father, the doctor. She respected and

loved farming people, but she was not one of them as I have been and as I hope always to be, however far away I go. I want to learn to write of them in such a way that if Sarah Orne Jewett could read what I say she would imagine herself one of them, at least until she closed the book. Perhaps I can never do it, but I can try." (*To Remember Forever* (1963) Little, Brown, & Co.)

To those who have read any of Mrs. Carroll's excellent works such as *As The Earth Turns*, *Dunnybrook*, *Only Fifty Years Ago*, and *Next of Kin*, it should be obvious that she has achieved the goals she set for herself as a young,

aspiring writer.

It was a memorable experience for all who were fortunate enough to attend Mrs. Carroll's readings at the Hamilton House shortly after her 79th birthday in June, 1983. How appropriate it was for Mrs. Carroll to read selections from Sarah Orne Jewett's *The Tory Lover*, for the magnificent old Georgian home overlooking the Piscataqua River provided the setting for much of Miss Jewett's novel, published in 1901, a few years before the author's death. As Mrs. Carroll read in her soft but resonant voice, one could once again see the picturesque gundalows with their white sails

Hamilton House — Scene of the Tory Lover



Jewett Home

either going or coming from Portsmouth—laden with cargo; hear the crews calling boisterously to each other; or see the lovely, gracious figure of Elizabeth Wallingford standing before a window, gazing down across the terraced gardens and the broad sweep of lawns to the river below. One could feel the spirit of Sarah Orne Jewett herself, for she loved the old Hamilton House so dearly and was instrumental in persuading Emily Tyson, a wealthy widow, to restore and refurnish the eighteenth century mansion that won the admiration and the praise of Henry James.

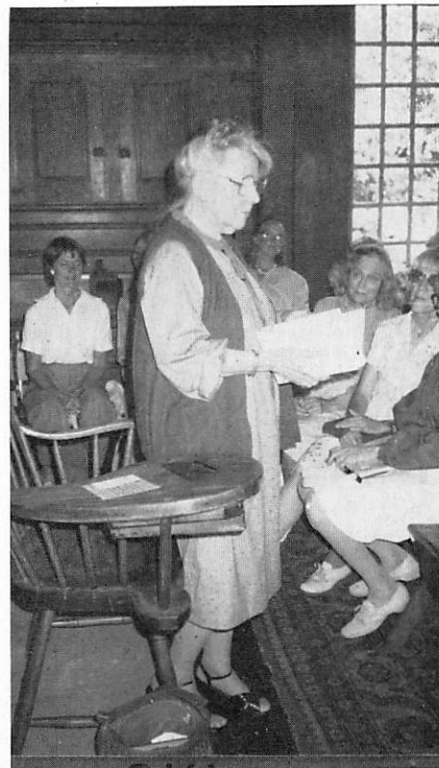
During the intermission, two talented musicians played folk music—echoes of the past when Sarah Orne Jewett was rowing along the river and saw two itinerant musicians performing on the grassy banks not far from the Hamilton House.

The second half of the program was held inside the Doll House, and the audience sat spellbound as Mrs. Carroll read from her own *Dunnybrook*, in which she portrays so wonderfully her little corner of the universe and the folks

who have meant so much to her during her long and fruitful life.

Later, after Mrs. Carroll had chatted with friends and admirers and autographed copies of her works, she could be seen driving off in her Volkswagon—accompanied by two of her grandchildren. As she drove by the stately old Jewett home in the village square, it would be nice to think there was a smile on the invisible lips of Sarah Orne Jewett as she watched the passing of a "kindred spirit."

On June 26, Gladys Hasty Carroll will celebrate her 80th birthday. The author and the staff of *BitterSweet* wish her a very special happy birthday. J.B.



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BOB SAUNDERS FIXING GOULD'S CLOCK

Two years ago, on Alumni Day, Former Gould Headmaster Donald W. Fudge remarked at the luncheon that he wished the school had the money to repair the landmark Gehring Hall tower clock. At the time he reported that a rough estimate of \$25,000 had been submitted for its repair and that Gould could not proceed with the project because this money was needed in other, more critical areas of the school's operation. In that alumni audience was Robert Saunders '66 who thought to himself, "Just about anything can be repaired, and what a good way this might be to contribute to Gould." Bob has always had an interest in mechanical things, an interest which was expanded when he attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, where he earned his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. There he studied several kinds of machinery, learning installation and service of their workings. He felt that the Gehring clock just might present a solvable problem. The clock, with a total of four faces, was made by Standard Electric Time Corporation and was installed at the time Gehring Hall was constructed in 1926.

Working with Burt Hedjuk, who is in charge of maintenance at Gould, Bob traced the wiring and cleaned and lubricated the clock drive in the tower. The most complicated piece of equipment in the whole system was the master-drive pendulum timepiece located on the first floor of Gehring Hall. It had been worked on by Clayton Crockett '41, also of the Gould staff. The pendulum clock worked beautifully everywhere except when installed in Gehring. Bob ultimately decided to bypass it altogether to get the tower clock going. As a result, the clock is not as accurate as it should be, but periodic adjustments are a small price to pay to have the faces in working order.

Bob also found the switch that turns on the lights in the tower. It was thought that the switch did nothing, because nothing happened when it was

turned on. All the lamps in the tower were burned out. So, traffic signal bulbs of 103 watts each, with a life expectancy of 6000 hours (about 10 times the life of an average household bulb), were installed. Now the clock's faces glow at night, allowing all to tell time after dark.

Working amidst 55 years' accumulation of dust, dead flies, and a dead mouse, Bob used dental mirrors to enable him to see into the clock mechanism—all the while standing on a loose 2 x 8 inch plank placed between beams. He said the plank wouldn't fall, but it could flip over if he wasn't careful! To get to the clock's faces, he had to climb over the bell which had fallen silent over the years.

Now, a year and a half later, we are happy to report that three of the four clock faces work beautifully. Only the west side has problems. Its minute hand will not turn. Also, the tower bell now chimes the hours. After years of silence some are not sure that this is a welcome change, but most agree it is nice to be able to see and hear the correct time. An operating tower clock is of significant benefit for the Gould faculty—as students now have no excuse to be late to class. (No longer do the bells ring in Hanscom Hall to signal the beginning and end of class periods.)

Bob Saunders is general manager of the Hanover Dowel Company located just a short distance from the Gould campus, a company that was started just before the Great Depression about the same time Gehring Hall was constructed. He holds a master electrician's license and uses his "tinkering" ability to keep the company machinery in good working order. His father, Wallace Saunders of the Class of 1927, also is associated with Hanover, a manufacturer of dowels, glue pins, assorted wooden handles, and other turned wood products. Bob believes that there still is much work to be done on the Gehring clock, but is confident in time it will be accomplished. All of us here at Gould, and alumni who return to the school, are pleased with Bob's initiative and with the working clock.

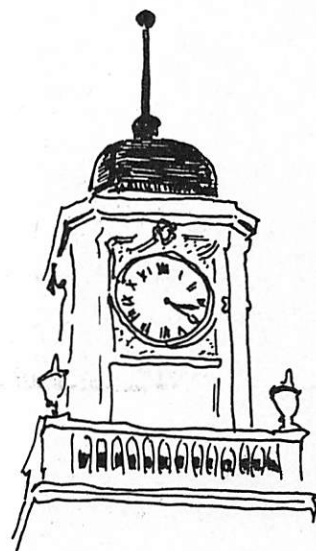


*Alvin Barth
Gould Academy*

Folk Tales

GOULD ACADEMY

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Rick Crockett: Beyond The Call of Beauty

Rick Crockett is a poet. I'm not one to quibble over terms—much of what he writes could be called prose, but he has the soul and timing of a poet, so I call him that. I might just as well call him a softball player, or a *maitre d'*, or an exquisite correspondent, or a romantic, or a humorist—for he is all of those things, and more.

But what else could you say about a man capable of phrases like: "a good time grand tattoo . . . a parade with a clearer view" (*High Attitudes*), or who writes of "hungry fingers" (*Musician*), or of a room "pink as an infant's eyelids" (*Moving Like Chaney Through The Night*)?

You could call him an observer of moments in time. He observes, as any good writer does, and it sometimes gets very prosey, such as this from *Waitress*: "(she was) weaving like a polite needle with elbows through the social fabric of saturday night . . . with an immunity worth roughly twenty-five percent." But the balance, the rhythm, is pure poetry.

You could call him (as many have) a Portland poet. He lives there, works there (at F. Parker Reidy's), walks around and seems to know almost everyone there. Born in Maine, he actually became

a citizen of the world as "Air Force brat" and Navy veteran. Still, he's written much about his city of choice. *Lines On The Face of Portland* appeared in July '83's *BitterSweet* and permanently graces the foyer of Reidy's restaurant. But Rick Crockett's writing has a much more universal appeal.

Nationally-known poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti thinks Rick's latest manuscript (*Beyond The Call of Beauty** from which come these poems), ought to be a big-time book. Rick has published, as "Mellowink Company," three other books of his own poetry: *Flesh Crayons*, *Let The Child In Your Heart Free*, and *What Do You Say To An Atheist Who Sneezes?* Each was a progressive growth step, in which Crockett matured from wise-guy street poet to the sophisticated writer of the present collection.

Beyond The Call of Beauty is poetry more grown-up, without the snappy come-back, the obvious ironic parry-and-thrust, without the drumbeat pause. That was Vaudeville; this is Broadway.

Not that we couldn't respect poems from his previous collections—in fact, many were dear to us, but not all. This collection has much more to offer. And Rick Crockett, a multi-talented, gentle rangy man, writes his poems as whole collections—telling a story of a period of time or experience and aimed at a definite audience response.

He observes well and shares his inner reactions to those observations of human nature even better. Not for nothing has he a sociology degree from the University of West Virginia! But this is not academic poetry—you don't need a B.A. Lit. degree to understand. These familiar references elicit an "oh, yes," response from the reader: "Oh, yes, I've felt that way, too."

There's a great deal of everyday humor here as well: "a waiter doing well to describe coq-au-vin blanc to a woman in a dress you could say she was almost wearing" (*Woman In A Dress*), or "he and bowl of wonton sprawled on the floor steaming" (*Wasted Motion*).

Perhaps Rick Crockett will always be like "that child who will always ask too much of his dreams" (*Fat Chance*). But I think he is destined to greater fame. Read some of his poems and decide for yourself. N.M.

**At press time, the working title had been changed to "In Awe of Common Laughter."*

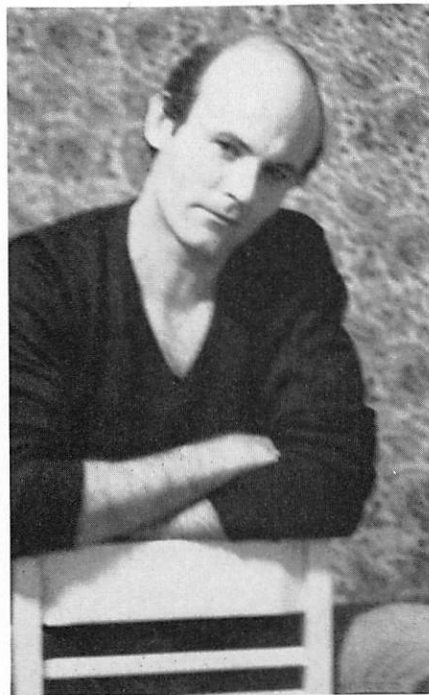


Photo by "Annie"

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WOMAN IN A DRESS

Like
satin
vermi-
celli
those
straps
flimsy
flop-
ping
subtle
off
her
bare
eggshell
shoulders
& a waiter
doing well
to describe
coq-au-vin
blanc to a
woman in a
dress you
could say
she was
almost
wearing.

CREATIVE WRITING IN AN OTHERWISE ORDINARY KITCHEN

Crawling
unbroken
the steady
stitch of
molasses
dripping
liquid
thread
off the
tip of a
teaspoon
was none-
theless an
original way
to scrawl
one's name
into a glass
of cold milk.

LITTLE GIRL IN A COAT OF YELLOW RAIN

That fairy
of teeth
could have
left sprouts
of brussels
underneath
her pillow
for all it
mattered now
instead of a
bill of dollar
she had to break
as if her heart
for a book of
coloring that
dropped like
a clumsy tear
from her brown
bag of paper &
into a puddle
of mud she did
not quite jump
in buckleboots
two sizes too
big for her
feet what
with those
eyes sad
as a dog in
a downpour.

IN THE CORNER OF AN ALLEY EXACTLY

Sporadic
flecks of
silver in
his beard
flickering
like bits
of christmas
tinsel a man
of wine squats
in the corner
of an alley
exactly where
the sun thrusts
its dusty lance
of light upon
him & a pencil
filling in the
squares of his
crossword puzzle.

INNOCENT EAVESDROP

Sparkless
her gaze
rolls for
a cool spot
on the ceiling
as though two
eyeballs taking
emergency leave
from her body
& a husband
drooling
syllables
about duties
& dirty dishes
which attempt
to torch
her spirit
but wholly
fail as if
a man trying
to ignite
green wood
with only
a marriage
certificate
for kindling
(or that
paper
napkin
suffo-
cating
inside
her fist)

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AMERICAN BEAUTY

The right
sleeve of
his t-shirt
rolled like
a single ring
of dough around
his shoulderknob
shiny & unveiling
the tattoo of a
rose longstemmed
on his bicep
growing as he
catapults the
anthropologic
stuff of
trashcans
into the
hydraulic
jaws of a
yawning truck.

MICHAEL'S DAUGHTER

Small birds
motionless
like wooden
clothespins
still cling
to the line
that sent news
of the death
of your daddy
as you come
home to hands
that want to
say something
but cannot for
fear of fingers
dropping pointless
as condolences to
the kitchen floor.

WAITRESS

Perhaps
a touch
aloof if
you like
but she was
a striking sort
of handsome person
with hair pulled back
into a ponytail that
bounced like a paint-
brush off the back of
her danskin as she
carried mixed drinks
& mugs of draught beer
balanced on a corklined
tray above her head with
apparent great knowledge
of the laws of gravity
while weaving like a
polite needle with
elbows through the
social fabric of
saturday night
toward men sitting
etherized by the
smoky muzak &
collision of
silverware
playing in
the background
& she always
smiling but
getting the
point of the
game across
perfectly as
she walked away
with an immunity
worth roughly
twenty-five
percent.

HIGH ATTITUDES

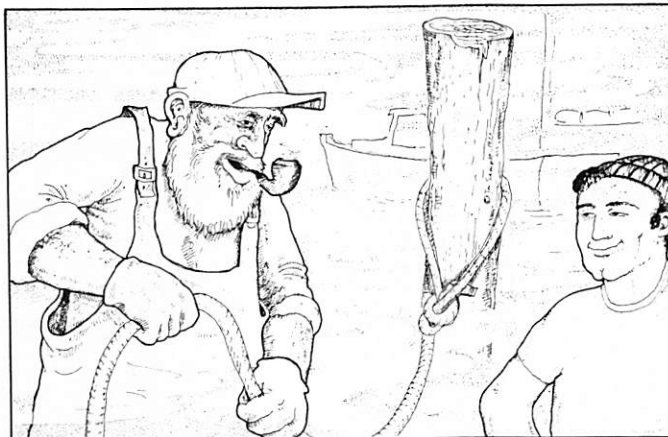
She had a ritz-
crackerian way
of turning any
tasteless task
into a goodtime
grand tattoo &
it looks like
love has led me
by the wrist of
my restless pulse
to a parade with
a clearer view.

*Rick Crockett
Portland, Maine*

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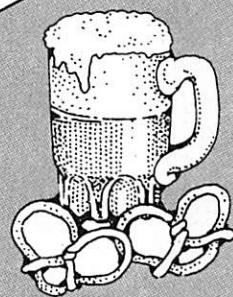


THIS AINT NAWTHIN, BOY... I WUZ SHINGLIN' MY ROOF BACK IN '58.....
... WHY THE FOG WUZ S'THICK... I GOT OUT 3 FT. OVER THE EDGE, 'FORE I KNEW IT.



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The Draggerman

Fiction by Becky Lane

Jim Morley was a gentle bear of a man and I used to love to see him lumber into the bar when his boat was in. "How you doin' Beth?" he'd rumble when I put a beer mug in front of him. He'd look at me with eyes like a calm day at sea, and smile that slow, sweet smile of his. The beer mug was dwarfed by his hands—draggerman's hands, all scarred up the way they get, with palms that felt like leather. He'd drink his beer in two gulps, and then patiently fill his pipe with fingers too big and clumsy for the task. He'd lean back, smile and smoke his pipe with the air of a man who was exactly where he wanted to be.

"Jim Morley's a good man to have on deck," I'd heard more than one man say with beery conviction and an emphatic nod of the head, which is the highest compliment paid in a waterfront bar. He never said much—didn't seem to be a man who had to, if you know what I mean. He would just smile his sweet smile, smoke his pipe, and drink his beer.

I saw him get drunk only once. Rumor had it he'd gotten home from a trip and found his wife gone. She took the boy, the dog, and the bankbook, and left him a note that said she couldn't be a draggerman's wife anymore. He silently drank beer after beer until he slumped forward, and his massive brown head rested on the bar. It gave me that same sick-sad feeling I got once when I watched my grandfather fell an old oak tree that was blocking the sunlight from my grandmother's kitchen.

Jim's buddies flanked him and made jokes about how he'd eaten berries and roots all fall to get prepared for that long, long nap he was taking. But they wouldn't let anyone else make jokes about him; and when they carried him to the taxi, they were so gentle I wanted to cry.

This is Scarborough resident Becky Lane's first published story.



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow:

by Jack C. Barnes

Among the statues, busts, medallions, and plaques honoring England's greatest literary figures in Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey stands the bust of Maine's Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. He is the only American ever to be granted a place of honor with such as Shakespeare, Milton, Chaucer, Byron, Shelley, Keats, and Wordsworth.

With the possible exception of John Greenleaf Whittier, no American writer of the nineteenth century came close to Longfellow in winning a place in the hearts of so many people around the world. Abraham Lincoln was moved to tears by Longfellow's "The Building of the Ship." His poems enjoyed enormous sales during his lifetime. What poet today would not be ecstatic over receiving \$4000 for a single poem, which was the munificent sum paid by a New York newspaper for his "The Hanging of the Crane"? His poems were translated into every major European language as well as such non-European tongues as Chinese, Armenian, Hebrew, Sanskrit, and Marathi. In England, at a time when that country was reveling in its "Golden Age of Poetry," Longfellow was as popular as Alfred Lord Tennyson, while William Browning was struggling for recognition. During the last of Longfellow's frequent sojourns and treks about Europe, he was an honored guest of Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle; and both Oxford and Cambridge Universities conferred LL.D. degrees upon him.

It is irrefutable that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow came from prominent bloodlines. The Longfellow ancestry in America begins with William Longfellow. Born near Leeds in Yorkshire, England, in 1651, he set sail for

the New World in 1676 and settled in Newbury, Massachusetts—an early Mecca for intellectuals such as the Lowells, Emersons, Greenleaves, Whittiers, and Sewalls. (Between 1642 and 1645 Newbury produced 308 Harvard graduates.)

In 1678 William married Ann Sewall, a sister of the distinguished Chief Justice Samuel Sewall. William was a part of the ill-fated expeditionary force, under the command of Sir William Phipps, which attempted to capture Quebec in 1690. William was drowned during a shipwreck on the return voyage. A grandson of William, Stephen Longfellow, graduated from Harvard in 1742 and came to the District of Maine. He lived in York briefly and married a York girl—Tabitha Bragdon. Stephen soon moved to Portland (then called Fal-

mouth) where he taught in a grammar school and later became clerk of the Judicial Court. He would become the poet's great-grandfather.

A son, also named Stephen, married Patience Young of York and built the farm in Gorham which today is known as the Longfellow Farm. He was a Judge of the Common Pleas in Portland. When Captain Henry Mowat bombarded Falmouth on October 18, 1775, in retaliation for his earlier arrest by patriots, the Judge's father and mother moved with what belongings they had salvaged from the conflagration to live on the Gorham farm.

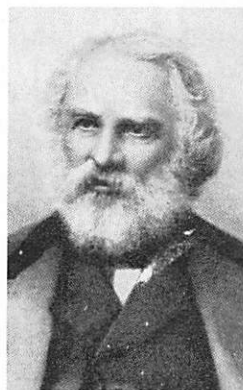
It was on the farm in Gorham that the poet's father was born on March 23, 1776. He was the fourth consecutive Stephen Longfellow.

Henry's father was a serious minded

Wadsworth Farm, Hiram, Maine



A Poet's Childhood



student and a Phi Beta Kappa at Harvard. He studied law in Portland under Salmon Chase, uncle of Salmon Portland Chase who served as Secretary of Treasury in Lincoln's cabinet and later as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

On January 1, 1804, the poet's father Stephen married Zilpah Wadsworth, daughter of General Peleg Wadsworth of Revolutionary War fame. Like the Longfellows, Peleg was a Harvard graduate, and he too could trace his ancestry back to England. His great, great grandfather was Christopher Wadsworth, one of the first to settle in Duxbury, Massachusetts from Yorkshire, England. How exciting it was for Henry Longfellow to learn that he was a direct descendant of William Brewster, John Alden, and Priscilla Mullen. His Puritan connection would inspire him to write *The Court-*

ship of Miles Standish, published in 1858.

Following the Revolutionary War, General Wadsworth settled in Portland, where he built the first brick home in the small port city in 1784-1785—today known as the Longfellow Home on Congress Street. The much-admired bricks came from Philadelphia, since, at that time, there was no local place where bricks were made. Next to the Georgian-style house and formal garden, he built a store; and for a while he became a shopkeeper.

One can envision the poet in 1846, during one of his frequent visits to his childhood home, gazing thoughtfully down from one of the upstairs front windows to the bustling harbor, the myriad of islands, and the open sea beyond. The view inspired him to write

Longfellow Farm, Gorham, Maine

the following lines in "My Lost Youth" almost ten years later:

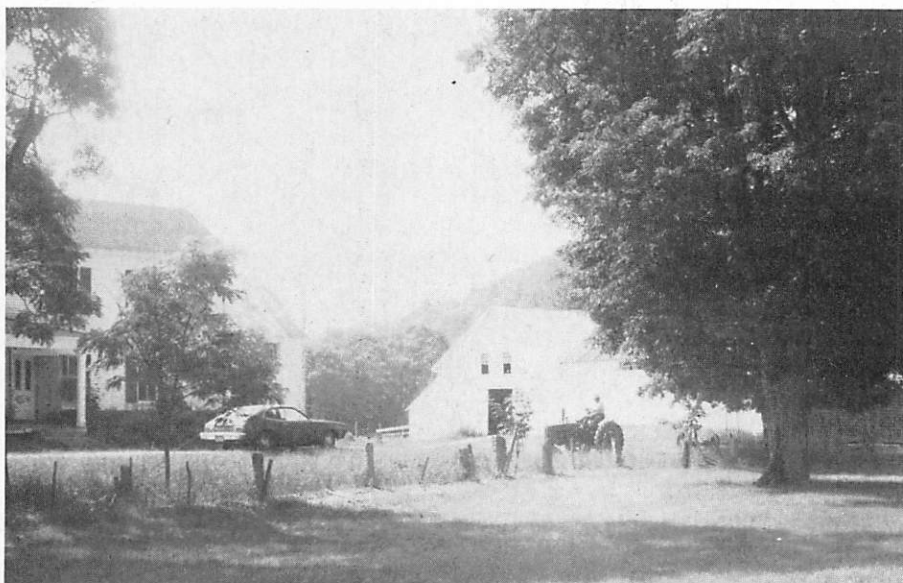
*I can see the shadowy lines of its
trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding
seas,
And islands that were the
Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.*

Looking to the right and southward, Longfellow could see the imposing lighthouse at Cape Elizabeth which prompted him later to pen the following lines in "Lighthouse":

*The rocky ledge runs far into the
sea,
And on its outer point, some
miles away,
The lighthouse lifts its massive
masonry,
A pillar of fire by night, of cloud
by day.*

From the rear window, Longfellow could gaze across fields that stretched down to Deering Woods, Back Cove, and to the dense forests through which Forest Avenue now runs. Far beyond, he could see Douglas Hill in what is now Sebago and the hills of Hiram. On really clear days he could behold the lofty White Mountains. From an open window he could hear the tinkling of cow bells over on Munjoy Hill.

Henry was not born in the house he loved so dearly. Romanticist that he was, he would have undoubtedly chosen the house his grandfather Wadsworth had built if he had had a say in the matter; but, of course, he did not. Instead, he was born in a huge three-story clapboard house at the corner of Hancock and Fore Streets, almost at the harbor's



edge. (The old house that was the scene of his birth fell into a sad state of disrepair and was finally torn down in the early 1950's.) It was the home of Captain Stephenson, who had fled the inferno of 1776, along with the poet's paternal great-grandfather, to Judge Longfellow's farm in Gorham. After the war, Captain Stephenson returned to rebuild a home from the ashes of his former mansion. But he did not return alone. He married one of the Judge's daughters, an aunt to Henry, and took her home to Portland with him.

The Longfellows came from their Temple Street house (also a victim of the changing times) to the Stephenson home to keep Stephen Longfellow's sister company while Captain Stephenson was on a voyage to the West Indies.

On February 27, 1807, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow came into this world within a stone's throw of the frigid waters of the Atlantic. A few months later the Longfellows were back in the house on Temple Street. Within a short time, however, they were moving once again; this time it was to the brick house that remains as a memorial to the poet today.

Portland was rapidly becoming too civilized for Peleg, so in the fall of 1807, he turned his Portland home over to Stephen and Zilpah and headed out to where a man could tame the wilderness and till the soil. The general had purchased 7,800 acres of land for 12½ cents an acre and in 1814 built the imposing Wadsworth Hall, not far from the Saco River in what became the town of Hiram.

What were the factors, events, and circumstances which then brought out the creativity in Longfellow? Why was he blessed with the sensitivity, imagination, and spontaneity that inspired words to flow from his pen—words that would touch the souls of both young and old, layman and intellectual?

Longfellow's answer to such probing inquiries was: "What we call miracles and wonders of art are not so to him who created them; for they were created

by the natural movements of his own great soul. Statues, paintings, churches, poems are but shadows of himself—shadows in marble, colors, stone, words. He feels and recognizes their beauty; but he thought these thoughts and produced these things as easily as inferior minds do thoughts and things inferior."

No young man could have been blessed with more distinguished ancestry than Longfellow. Although the poet's great-great grandfather Stephen, the son of William Longfellow, had been a blacksmith in Newbury, the Longfellows usually manifested a predilection for law. Young Henry, however, like so many boys who were fortunate enough to grow up before the era of the automobile, found the "village smithy" a fascinating person to watch while at work at his forge or managing a recalcitrant horse or an ox in a sling. He was thrilled to learn about his blacksmith ancestor. Generation after generation of young people came to know and love Maine's illustrious bard from having "The Village Blacksmith" read to them by their teachers, from the little school where two country roads converged to the largest of city schools.

The Courtship of Miles Standish is evidence enough that Longfellow was both proud and inspired by his Wadsworth connection with Priscilla Mullen and John Alden. Indeed, there was much about his mother's family that inspired Longfellow's poetical talents.

A goodly number of the Wadsworth men distinguished themselves as naval and army officers. The role General Peleg Wadsworth played in the Revolutionary War is well-known. (It is perhaps worthy of note that one of the large diesel locomotives that often pulls in excess of one hundred freight cars along the White Mountain Line from Portland to St. Johnsbury, Vermont, and back is named in honor of the general and passes within sight of the narrow country road that leads to the Wadsworth farm.)

The poet was named after his uncle, Lt. Henry Wadsworth, who died a hero's death during the war against the Barbary

Pirates. In 1804, he and a shipmate blew themselves up on the *Intrepid* in the harbor of Tripoli rather than surrender their ship to the enemy.

Despite the martial talents of the Wadsworth men, they seem also to have possessed sensitivity, keen intellect, and an awareness of intrinsic beauty. It must be remembered that the world of both the Longfellows and the Wadsworths was still largely wilderness. There was little leisure time for any of them to discover latent literary talents that either side of the family might have harbored. The poet's maternal and paternal grandparents were born when America was still a British colony. His parents lived through the Revolutionary War, and the poet himself was six years old at the time of the epic naval engagement off Casco Bay during the War of 1812 in which the American *Enterprise* captured the British brig, *Boxer*. The tragic deaths of both the young captains and their funeral in which they were laid to rest side by side in Portland's Eastern Cemetery made a lasting impression upon the youth. Years later he recalled the dramatic engagement and the pathos of the aftermath in the following stanza of "My Lost Youth":

*I remember the sea fight far away,
And the dead captains, as they lay
In their graves, o'erlooking the
tranquil bay,
Where they in battle died.*

Following the War of 1812, prosperity returned to the little port city of Portland where there were only 7000 people living. It came too late, however, for Longfellow's uncle, Captain Samuel Stephenson, who was forced to sell the home in which the poet was born and move out to Gorham on a farm adjacent to Judge Longfellow's.

Although, as a youth, the poet devoted far more time to books than to sports, he did enjoy romping about the docks, along the seashore, and down to Deering Woods with Edward Preble, his older brother Stephen, and other friends. Often he would accompany his mother to the quiet of Deering Woods, where

she would read to him. Once, with his brother Stephen, he shot a robin and grieved over its death afterward. He showed no interest in hunting thereafter.

What did interest him was Potter's Lane (approximately where the U.S. Post Office Building is today) and the whirling of the potter's wheel. The poet, with his remarkable memory, recorded the song of the potter in "Keramos" (*Keramos and Other Poems*, published in 1878):

*Turn, turn, my wheel! Turn
round and round*

*Without a pause, without a
sound:*

*So spins the flying world away!
This clay, well mixed with marl
and sand,*

*Follows the motion of my hand;
For some must follow, and some
command,*

Though all are made of clay!

Of equal interest to young Longfellow were the rope walks where the small ropes were spun by hand, and the larger ones, such as hausers, were twisted by horsepower. Longfellow often visited the one at Back Cove (near Washington Avenue), and later depicted for posterity a scene long since vanished in "The Rope Walk":

Longfellow Hall, Portland

*In the building, long and low,
With its windows all a-row,
Like the port-holes of a bulk,
Human spiders spin and spin,
Backward down their threads so
thin*

Dropping, each a hempen bulk.

As a youth, Longfellow made many visits to both his paternal and maternal grandparents' farms during vacations from school. His sojourns at the Longfellow Farm in Gorham were more frequent, because of its nearness to Portland. He enjoyed fetching the cows from the pasture at milking time, watching the butter churned and cheese made in a cheesepress. The whirling of wheels seemed to hold a special fascination for the poet all his life. He sat mesmerized for hours while his grandmother Patience worked diligently at the spinning wheel.

Even more exciting were the longer trips with his mother to stay with the old general at his capacious farm in Hiram and visit Uncle Peleg, Jr. higher up on the mountain. The general would wave his cane at his daughter and grandson as their carriage came rattling up the lane and exclaim, "Heigh, you young rascal!"

At the great mansion in the wilderness, towering pine trees (one said to



Monument Square

still bear the marking of the King's pine) stood like giant sentinels on either side of the rutted entrance road. The poet loved the noble white pine of his native state. Perhaps it was as much the lofty pines that grew in Hiram as the imposing cathedral pines at Bowdoin that Longfellow could see from his window (room 27) in Maine Hall that inspired him to write "My Cathedral:"

*Like two cathedral towers these
stately pines*

*Uplift their fretted summits
tipped with cones;*

The young Longfellow never ceased to be enthralled with the exciting stories told by his distinguished grandfather who, like his grandfather Longfellow, continued to powder his hair and dress in the fashion of the eighteenth century. (The general's three-cornered black felt hat and other memorabilia are on display at the Longfellow House in Portland.) Most of all, he enjoyed General Wadsworth's account of how he and a companion made their escape from the

Page 42 . . .





The Poems of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

My Lost Youth

Often I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.
And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free;
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,
And the fort upon the hill;
The sunrise gun, with its hollow roar,
The drum-beat repeated o'er and o'er,
And the bugle wild and shrill.
And the music of that old song
Throbs in my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."

I remember the sea-fight far away,
How it thundered o'er the tide!
And the dead captains, as they lay
In their graves, o'erlooking the tranquil bay
Where they in battle died.
And the sound of that mournful song
Goes through me with a thrill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."

My Cathedral

Like two cathedral towers these stately pines
Uplift their fretted summits tipped with
cones;
The arch beneath them is not built with
stones,
Not Art but Nature traced these lovely
lines,
And carved this graceful arabesque of vines;
No organ but the wind here sighs and
moans,
No sepulchre conceals a martyr's bones,
No marble bishop on his tomb reclines.
Enter! the pavement, carpeted with leaves,
Gives back a softened echo to thy tread!
Listen! the choir is singing; all the birds,
In leafy galleries beneath the eaves,
Are singing! listen, ere the sound be fled,
And learn there may be worship without
words.

The Village Blacksmith

Under a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns what'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

I can see the breezy dome of groves,
The shadows of Deering's Woods;
And the friendships old and the early loves
Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves
In quiet neighborhoods.

And the verse of that sweet old song,
It flutters and murmurs still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."

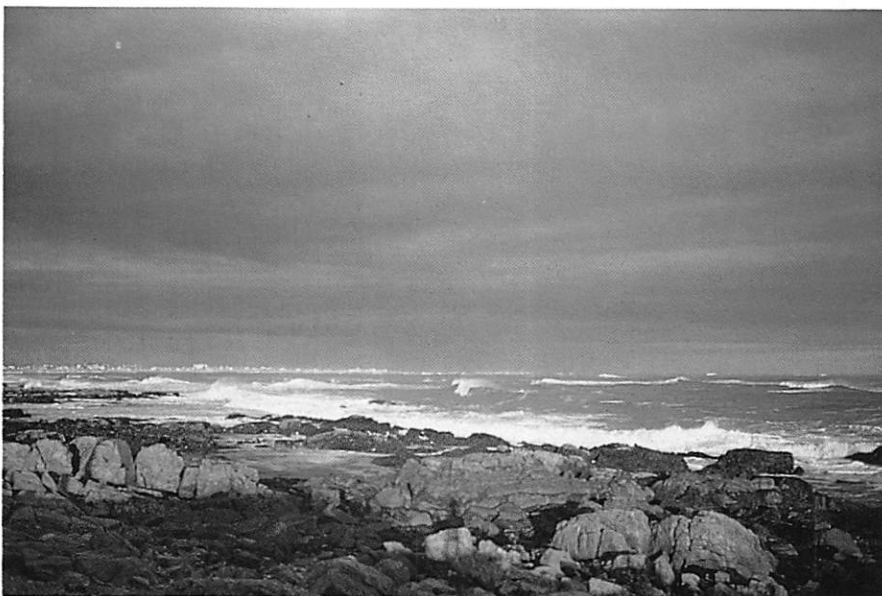
I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the school-boy's brain;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on, and is never still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."

There are things of which I may not speak;
There are dreams that cannot die;
There are thoughts that make the strong
heart weak,
And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."

Strange to me now are the forms I meet
When I visit the dear old town;
But the native air is pure and sweet,
And the trees that o'ershadow each well-
known street,

As they balance up and down,
Are singing the beautiful song,
Are sighing and whispering still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."

And Deering's Woods are fresh and fair,
And with joy that is almost pain
My heart goes back to wander there,
And among the dreams of the days that were,
I find my lost youth again.
And the strange and beautiful song,
The groves are repeating it still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."



The Tide Rises, The Tide Falls

The tide rises, the tide falls,
The twilight darkens, the curlew calls;
Along the sea-sands damp and brown
The traveller hastens toward the town,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

Darkness settles on roof and walls,
But the sea, the sea in the darkness calls;
The little waves, with their soft, white hands,
Efface the footprints in the sands,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

The morning breaks; the steeds in their stalls
Stamp and neigh, as the hostler calls;
The day returns, but nevermore
Returns the traveller to the shore,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

The Tides

I saw the long line of the vacant shore,
The sea-weed and the shells upon the sand,
And the brown rocks left bare on every
hand,
As if the ebbing tide would flow no more.
Then heard I, more distinctly than before,
The ocean breathe and its great breast
expand,
And hurrying came on the defenceless land
The insurgent waters with tumultuous roar.
All thought and feeling and desire, I said,
Love, laughter, and the exultant joy of song,
Have ebbed from me forever! Suddenly
o'er me
They swept again from their deep ocean bed,
And in a tumult of delight, and strong
As youth, and beautiful as youth, upbore me.









Preceding page, "Sea Harvest,"
1980, watercolor

"Lloyd's Sheep," 1979, watercolor

Franklin County's Native Son

Ronal Parlin lives in a hollow of the New Vineyard foothills, those abruptly humped hillsides that rise from roadside on Maine's Route 27. They are precursors to the majesty of the Appalachian Range rising just north of town in a sprawling blue vista of Mount Abraham, Black Nubble, Sugarloaf and the Bigelows. Skiers regularly flash past this small mill town—settled by Cape Cod whaling families who migrated following the Revolution in search of promising farmland and the chance to raise a "new vineyard." Here is a region that rises and slopes around spring-fed lakes like Clearwater and marshy ponds where

orioles and lily-pads predominate.

Habitat for an artist, it is home for Ronal Parlin—the place he returned to in 1975 with a wife, Annette, and a dream for an artistic career. Both were newly graduated from Boston's New England School of Art and they lived in a one room cabin while they built a combination home, studio and gallery on a narrow dirt lane known as Twig-snapper Road.

Today Parlin's young sons Jeffrey and Chad storm through the house where their father has completed a year's worth of commissioned work for the Sears Corporation: thirty-four sketches

and paintings that hang in Chicago's Sears Tower, the tallest building in the world. They decorate executive suites, harmonizing with antique furnishings, Ming dynasty vases and masterpieces by Renoir and Rembrandt, becoming components of the largest collection of corporate art in the world.

Along with this sophisticated accomplishment is another, more rural dimension to Parlin's credit, a facet which compels people familiar with his art to consider Ronal's work as important renderings of Maine's rural heritage. His creative spirit focuses on the innate beauty of a rugged natural world while



"Wash Day," 1981, watercolor

New Vineyard Artist Ronal Parlin

by Cathy Lee Morris

encompassing the threads of cultural patterns with which we weave our lives. In painting his surroundings, Ronal records an on-going life of sap sheds and sheep herds. Although his subject may be local, his theme surpasses regionalism. When he conceives the meeting house, he paints a starkly white close-up of the twin doorways done in a linear, straight-laced reminder of our puritan past. He documents Maine with the understanding of a native son who is steeped in the ethic and environment of a century ago.

Ronal has the unique fortune of having been raised in a rustic manner more

typical of the Depression era. Born in 1954, he was sixth in a family of nine children. Electric power was late coming to the old clapboard cape on Kingfield's Freeman Ridge Road, and work-saving conveniences never did arrive. It is in terms of this youth that he explains his artistic perspective.

"When I was young, we lived getting-by. My folks worked hard. We lived in the woods and always heated with wood, had a garden, depended on fishing and hunting. I got a realist's view of what it takes to survive, and I got very close to nature, a feeling which I have never lost."

This youth spent amid the forested

ridges and waterways fostered Ronal's ability to communicate with the language of the deep woods. The mysterious lighting of the forest floor and the omnipresence of trees form strangely evocative symbols in words that are strictly representational in style. On canvas he arrests a cascading brook, rockstrewn and filling with autumn leaves; or a winter landscape of stumps and saplings, the snow dappled in slate-grey shadow, clarifying the thin January light with photographic exactness and quality of metaphor. Visions of life presented naturally, with accuracy, make Ronal Parlin part of the wave of Ameri-

can art talent with a renewed sense of the realistic.

Ronal's meticulous style depends upon being factual. To render seascapes, he travels to ports and sits beside the wharves. He has an avowed respect for the working man; thereby an affinity with the fishermen. Whenever he can, he goes out in their boats with them. His concentration on documenting becomes obvious in "Sea Harvest," a watercolor that is unusual in its high detail. Ronal "enjoys pushing the medium of watercolor further than I have seen done. I don't use any opaque white or mask-out material, just transparent watercolor. It's an effort at simplifying; I like working with the primaries and complimentary color."

Ronal credits the instructors at New England School of Art for their careful

teaching. While he responded to the desire for an urban experience, Ronal "always painted scenes from home, even when I was in Boston. I never had trouble remembering the feeling of Maine. The lighting is very clear here; distance is harder to detect. Sometimes I do a scene because I want to capture some light, other times I feel I am making a statement."

These unforgettable qualities as well as a knowing sense drew Ronal back to the place he interprets best, to live alongside the homestead of parents Ashley and Elisabeth (Libby) and to hunt and fish with his seven brothers. Memories of the past still unite the Parlin clan (the name derives from Gaelic MacPharlain) which includes fifteen grandchildren. They gather regularly to enjoy their brand of entertainment, sing-

ing a range of songs to the music of a multi-stringed band.

Ronal paints in the second story of his home, from an aerie overlooking pasture grown to woodland, where ceiling windows permit the diffused light and sweeping arc of forest to enter his studio. Below, a spiney rock wall marks old boundaries, running between the trees like a strong back, reminiscent of the labors spent in clearing these rugged mountain slopes. Ronal celebrates the endeavors of those early pioneers by continually painting their farmsteads, outbuildings and land. These have become a Parlin motif which collectively create a tribute to the self-sufficient farmers who bequeathed Franklin County's agrarian legacy.

A homestead on Anson Street in Farmington has been the subject of

"Times Spent," 1980, egg tempera



many Parlin paintings, including the late summer scene, "Wash Day." He explains the appeal of the place as down-to-earth.

"It's called the Fronk farm, and it sits on a very steep banking. The land is hard to work, hard to mow, and rocky. The topsoil is thin, quite often ledges poke through. The bony skeleton is apparent just beneath the surface. For me, the painting of a farm is a portrait of the farmer, his fences, fields, animals; and his wife, her neat house, the wash on the line—the working-together relationship that managed these farms."

Ronal's artistic interpretation acknowledges the stubborn land and demanding climate indigenous to Maine; however, there is no gothic sense of futility, isolation or grimly-lined faces, nor is there a proclivity toward the pastoral, Virgilian mode of romanticism with landscape. Instead, Parlin translates an abiding spirit that conquers through tenacity. He perceives Maine's old-timers as people working in accord with nature and capable of fostering an abundant and serene existence.

Ronal's sincere commitment to his youth, family and state have evolved coincidentally with his talent to produce insights into the experience of being from Maine. A print of his favorite portrait graces his studio wall; tersely entitled "Twigsnapper" (cover), it shows his dad, Ash Parlin, as an epic figure of the mountaineer—a vestigial hermit whose stoney visage is at once challenging, commanding, calm.

A large map covers another wall of his studio. Color-coded pins mark the location of work Ronal has sold. Higher priced work clusters around Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Illinois; others are on the West Coast, in Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Canada. There are some as far away as Europe, in all making an impressive visualization of the journey his talent has taken.

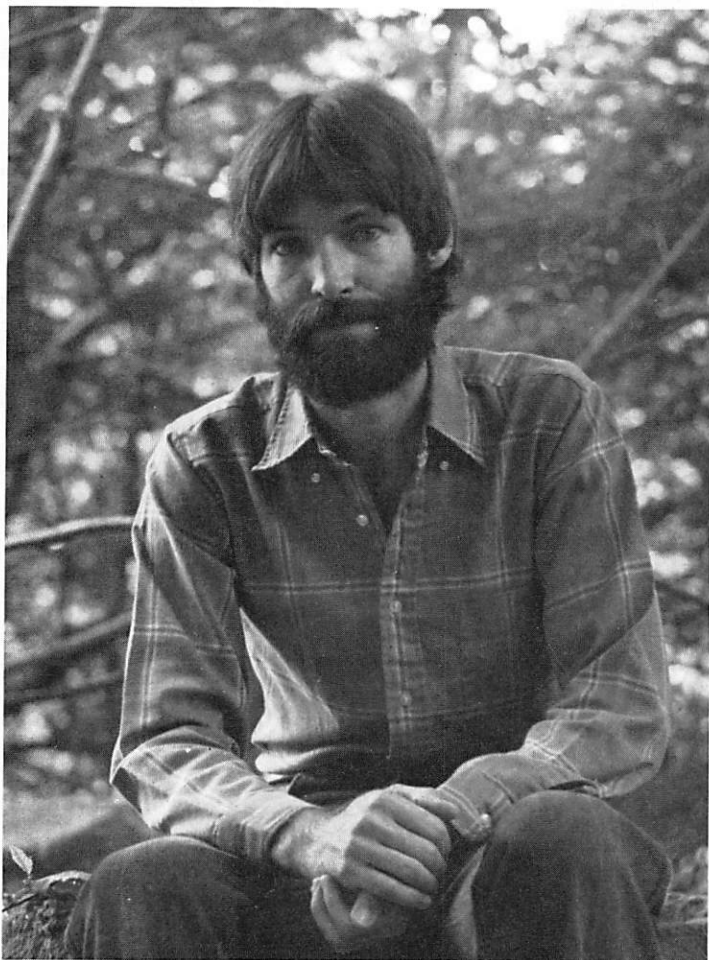
For a young person entering his thirties, Ronal has been pragmatic about his career as a professional artist, responsible for a family without benefit of patronage or subsidy. "I wanted to get established locally first, to have a home base of people interested in my art." It is an important communication, "to have people call, ask what I'm doing; to have them turn out for my shows."

He has fashioned a philosophy on progress: "An artist has to pace himself and the price of his work on a gradual increase throughout his career, and not be dictated by any sudden notoriety. I'm careful about public pressure to increase my work. People who buy my work love to see the prices go up. Whether or not this is a true reflection of value...?"

This is why Ronal is taking time off from large scale commissions. He has

finished an advertising poster in oils for Sugarloaf and is intent on turning out work for the galleries. He does not want to lose vital contact with the public and feels their evaluation of his work is a viable measure of achievement. In return, Ronal has become a popular figure by incorporating fundamentals of the Maine *persona*. He organizes regional artists for showings, demonstrates technique at myriad workshops and donates paintings to raffle for important civic fundraisers. And he always takes time to talk.

Ronal Parlin's vitality leaves a question about his future artistic work. Will he emulate the artists whose prints share his workspace, increasingly a genre painter like Remington or softening lines with the impression of Monet? However his life and perspective coalesce, many



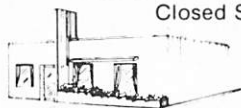
Ronal Parlin, Photo by Craig Wallace

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people are waiting to see his mid-life creations. Up in Franklin County, when folks talk about "that talented a'tist, Ronnie Pa'lin," they wish him all the best.



Cathy Lee Morris is a free-lance writer and mother of three in Lexington, an unorganized township next to Kingfield, Maine. A graduate of U.S.M., she has been published in Maine Times and Maine Life.

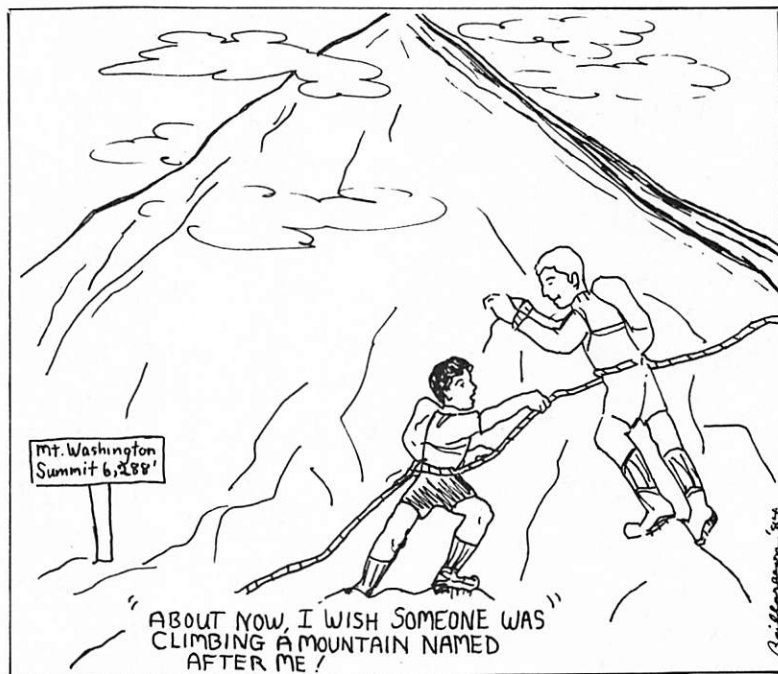
Times Spent is owned by Drs. Capen and Cornelia Farmer, Farmington, Me.; Sea Harvest by Robert Bean, Farmington; Wash Day by Josephine Kendall, Farmington; Twigsnapper by Carlo and Ann Mace, Creeskill, N.J.; and Lloyd's Sheep is owned by an anonymous collector.

CONFRONTATION

Rake
snake
quake
break

Ray Cotton
Hiram

Betty Baillargeon cartoon



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Every other ad has an unbelievable superlative statement: The Best!! New, Improved!!!

Of what use is a string of thoughtless marks? By its meaningless over-use and the resulting reactionary under-use, true marks of exclamation seem to have evaporated from modern American writing and speech.

"Have a nice day" is so common we hardly regard it as a benediction anymore. It's like the ubiquitous phrase "How are you?" which does *not* mean "I really want to know how you are." Usually, it doesn't even mean "I'm going to listen to your answer."

How much more it means with its superlative punctuation: "Have a nice day!" I tend to believe someone who exclaims it. They really *want* my day to be good. "It's great to be alive!" they are telling me. And then it truly is.

You will always find the exclamation in *BitterSweet's* pages. That's the positive, real outlook we prefer. A reader told us recently, "You're a magazine for the villagers." We like that. See you next month, with summer fun features from the northcountry.

Nancy Marcotte

Homemade

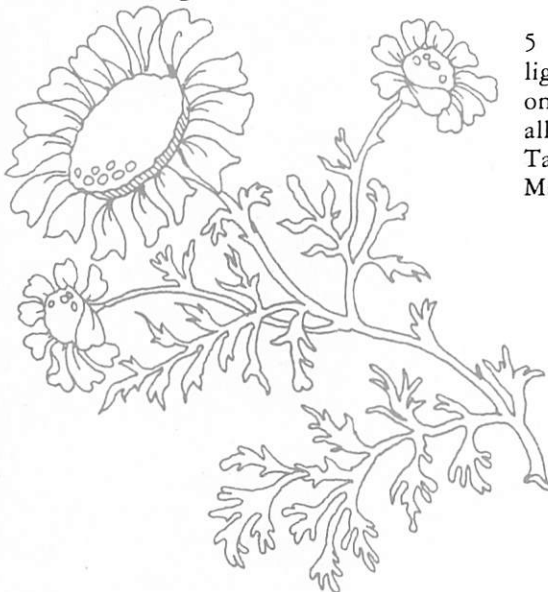
The Miracle of The Sunflower Seed

by Beatrice H. Comas

Sunflowers are being hailed as the miracle crop of the future as the demand for the oil increases yearly. Experts predict that this native American plant—originally cultivated by the Indians—will soon be blossoming on millions of acres, for it is a high paying crop for producers. The sunflower tolerates drought and cold better than most crops and farmers can use the same machinery they already have for planting, cultivating and harvesting. In Maine's Aroostook County, sunflowers are being grown successfully as a rotating crop with potatoes.

In the mid-eastern countries, sunflower seeds are often served as a regular course as we would serve salad, fruit, and nuts; but Americans have been slower to recognize that these nutritious seeds are not just bird food or snacks—they are also a fine addition to casseroles, cookies, breads and coffee cakes. Toss them with salad greens; use them as garnish for soup or as decoration on a freshly frosted cake. Sprinkle them on ice cream sundaes or mix them with dried fruits for granola or confections.

A small packet of seed purchased early in the spring from a garden store will produce enough plants to provide you with seeds for many months. Of course you can buy sunflower seeds in most large grocery stores or health food stores. A large supply won't take up much room and the hulled seeds can be stored in air-tight jars in a cool place. Once opened, the jars should be kept in the refrigerator.



Sunflower Bread

*1/4 cup butter or margarine,
softened*
1/4 cup honey
2 eggs
1 cup whole wheat flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 1/2 cups ground sunflower seeds
1 cup milk
1/2 cup whole sunflower seeds

Cream together butter and honey. Beat in eggs. In separate bowl stir together flour, salt, and baking powder, breaking up any lumps. Stir in ground sunflower seeds and add to first mixture alternately with milk. Beat well. Fold in whole sunflower seeds. Turn into well-greased loaf pan. Bake in a 325° F. oven for 1 hour. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan. Cool thoroughly before slicing.

Green Beans with Sunflower Seeds

4 cups cut green beans
2 green onions, finely chopped
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
1/2 teaspoon crushed marjoram
Salt and pepper to taste
1/4 cup hulled sunflower seeds

Cook green beans in 1/2 cup boiling salted water until tender-crisp. Drain. Saute onions in butter with marjoram for 5 minutes. Pour over beans. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add sunflower seeds and toss. Serves 4.

Seeds and Spice Protein Snack

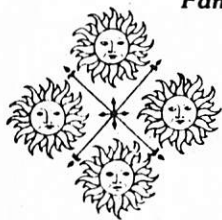
2 cups pumpkin seeds
2 cups shelled sunflower seeds
1/2 cup sesame seeds
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons oil
Celery salt
Cayenne pepper
Onion powder

Preheat oven to 350° F. Combine first 5 ingredients and toss gently. Season lightly with celery salt, cayenne and onion powder. Bake, stirring occasionally, about 20 minutes or until toasted. Taste and add more seasoning, if desired. Makes about 5 cups.

Green Noodle Salad with Sunflower Seeds

1 pound green noodles
*1/2 cup chopped green onion,
including tops*
1/4 cup prepared Italian dressing
*1 2-ounce jar or can chopped
pimientos, drained (optional)*
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup sour cream
*Salt and freshly ground pepper to
taste*
1/2 cup sunflower seeds, toasted

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Cook noodles in rapidly boiling water until al dente. Cook quickly under running water. Drain thoroughly. Place noodles in a large bowl and toss gently with green onion, dressing and pimientos. Combine equal parts mayonnaise and sour cream and add to pasta with salt and pepper. Toss again, adding sunflower seeds just before serving. Serves 4.

Nature's Bounty Fudge Squares

1 cup honey
1 cup peanut butter
1 cup carob powder
1 cup shelled sunflower seeds
1/2 cup coconut
1/2 cup walnuts, chopped
1/2 cup raisins

In a large saucepan, heat honey and peanut butter, stirring constantly just until smooth. Remove from heat. Stir in carob powder. Mix well. Add remaining ingredients. Press into buttered 8x8x2-inch pan. Chill several hours or overnight. Cut into 1-inch squares. Store in refrigerator.

Sunflower Seed Spread

Whirl 7-8 ounces roasted sunflower seeds in processor or blender with enough oil to form spread, or grind. Add salt or sugar to taste. Makes 1 cup. Keep refrigerated.

*Beatrice Comas is a free-lance writer
in Portland, Maine. She has written for
Maine Life.*



A STILLED NEST

Surrounded by four active children, and their friends making more company, the connotations of the Empty Nest Syndrome warranted little attention from me.

The days sped by ever so swiftly. I seldom found free time to dwell, on a vague distant time in the future, when my life wouldn't be filled quite as well.

With impatience I listened to most of my friends, as they methodically confronted this fate. It took a great deal of effort to sympathize, their serene "empty nests" sounded great.

Then in rapid succession my own started leaving. Undaunted, I took it in stride. I never considered I was shedding a tear, I maintained it was only "moist pride".

But today I turned over the calendar, and I'm appalled to see June is now here. The last child I have left, will graduate soon, and that insidious Syndrome lurks near.

Now I'm urgently calling every person I know, pleading tearfully, "Help, if you will. My final little bird is about to take flight, and I can't cope with a "nest" that's this still!"

Diane Scott
Buckfield



Homecoming to Maine a Month Early after Winter in Seattle

On my return this year,
I will find June:
with lilacs sweet as pagan wine,
with the rare and perfect days
in the fine and perfect places
that were the beauty and the terror
of my fragile nine-years' self.

This year, my mother's more than ninety years
will nearly double mine,
and we will celebrate the heady lilac.
My eyes will revel in the unaccustomed silken
sight
of lady's slipper unwithered, unworn.

Here in this western blaze of rhododendron,
I cherish those June lilacs, heavy and brief,
and I forget my mother's pink trailing arbutus
searched for in May in the innocent snowy
woods

I never knew.

Elizabeth Hobbs
Raymond

A Light In New Hampshire

*Chef Bali Szabo of the New England Inn
finds nourishment in the world
but returns to New Hampshire.*

by Patricia White

Bali Szabo, head chef at the New England Inn in Intervale, New Hampshire, does not spend his life in the kitchen. Between seasons he travels the world, searching for "gorgeous light" through the lens of his camera, light that bounces off Himalayan peaks in Tibet and Nepal, or off the dunes of the Sahara desert. His photographs appear in slick national magazines, but publishing is not his goal. After spending a long intense afternoon in conversation with him, one is left with the impression that the light he truly seeks is inner illumination, and he is close to finding it.

In his quest he roams the continents of the globe, hiking, back-packing, sleeping under stars, always traveling alone. "The more life-threatening the situation, the more difficult it is, the more alive I feel," he says. "I cannot imagine myself mellowing out or working a 9-to-5 job and going home after to sit and watch tv. I could not be a spectator to life."

His next trip will be through New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, Labrador—photographing from dawn until sunset and scouting recipes from the natives which he is certain will be North Atlantic cuisine in its finest sense.

"I have always been an 'American chef,' but of course, America is a melting pot and so encompasses everything from Italian food to the fish entrees of Nova Scotia. The *new American cuisine* emphasizes using fresh, locally available foods and regional recipes.

"Being a chef is a difficult job," he went on. "You are not just cooking. You



are running a kitchen. So now and then I must take to the Sahara or the Himalayan mountains in order to recoup! I come back regenerated."

On such trips, Bali travels "poor" in order to attain a rapport with the natives.

"The advantage of being broke is that you rely on local people and so they open up to you. You learn their language, their culture, their food. Not what is served in the Hilton hotels but rather what is being served and eaten in the poor neighborhoods and the villages outside the city.

"I'm the old-fashioned traveler type who prefers person-to-person contact rather than traveling in a tour group. Rather than do the latter, I would stay home."

Bali does not consider travel a far-fetched diversion for a chef. "You would become a vegetable if you did not get away. You would burn out. If you don't get away periodically you'll have a hard time keeping open to new ideas. But putting yourself in a new environment—ah, then you begin to pick ideas out of the air!"

Diversions such as travel or another avocation also ward off what Bali feels are the two things that "haunt" chefs: alcoholism and a tendency to become "dictators."

Despite these dangers, Bali considers the role of chef a superior challenge which requires a high level of ability and has many rewards. "There is more to it than cooking, although I enjoy very much working with food. An executive chef does not always get to do this, so I am fortunate. Running a kitchen requires eyes all around your head, like a *Buddha*!"

Perhaps his passion for life is explained in part by his having been born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1943. "My first words were 'boom, boom, boom'—the sound of gunfire," he says. "We lived in coal bins on a diet of potatoes. The Americans, Russians and Germans were all in the process of 'liberating' us at the same time.

"In 1956, at the age of 13, I began walking away from home. I was alone but found my way across the border to Andau, Austria. I spoke only Hungarian. The wife of a Swiss journalist noticed me in a headline. My eyes must have reflected what I had been through. She and her husband took me to Vienna.



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There I was processed and flown to New Jersey to begin my life in America.

"I wanted to understand the world," Bali says, and his education eventually encompassed as many aspects of that world as he could cram into it. At Oberlin College he studied government, history, international politics, art appreciation, music, astronomy, macrobiotics and so on.

Art, in particular, became a passion. The masters were studied in depth—two semesters on Rembrandt alone. "Although I had never been formally trained in painting or composition, my eye became trained from observing so much fine art. Later, when I first picked up a camera, I was in love. It was my window on the world, a one-on-one thing, with no compromise necessary. You take in a piece of reality and it comes out stained with you. Good art has a great eye for detail. It can reveal the greatest truth."

There is an intensity about Bali's intelligence that is like a fire, a light that crackles around him and shines from his eyes. It is no surprise that he discovered a monastery not long ago, "by accident, on a dirt road I didn't know, while chasing a cloud I was photographing..."; walked through its door out of curiosity, and emerged five weeks later, having spent eight hours a day there in meditation.

From there he came to New Hampshire. "I smelled the air. Pure. Clean. I looked at the mountains." Mountains inspire him. He placed an ad in a local newspaper, seeking a chef position, and was hired quickly.

Bali speaks of the need for responsibility if you are a creative person—whether chef, political scientist, or artist. "Effectiveness and legitimacy...these are necessary...a realistic adjustment to life."

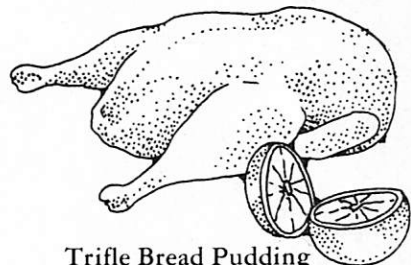
Also there is the need for stability, for having your feet on the ground. "It is bunk that you must suffer in order to create. I produce best when stable. Think how much more, in quality as well as quantity, Van Gogh and others might have produced had they lived; and had they not led such unstable lives..."

It is difficult to limit the conversation to food when speaking with Bali Szabo. The world itself is nourishment, a smorgasbord, to him. Yet he is focused like the lens of his camera, taking it all in but at the same time selecting, composing his life as if it were a canvas, a work of art, rich in detail, movement, vibration.

Bali Szabo's recipes

Shrimp and Chicken Genoa

Sauté *shrimp and chicken breasts* with a dash of *garlic, white wine, lemon and butter*, then cover with *cheese* (any kind, but Bali often uses an Italian cheese, such as provolone, or Swiss cheese), and broil until the cheese melts. This is a simple yet elegant main course, to be served with fresh vegetables.



Trifle Bread Pudding

Place in a 8x8 pan *four slices of buttered bread*, butter side down, on which have been spread *5 ounces of apricot jam plus one-half tablespoon of lemon juice*. Sprinkle over this a mixture of *almonds and mixed dried fruit* (about a quarter cup of the mixture). Then place another layer of buttered bread spread with another *5 ounces of jam plus lemon juice*, and top with another layer of the almonds and mixed fruit. Mix together a *custard of two cups of heavy cream, one cup of milk, one-quarter cup of cream sherry, three eggs, one-half cup sugar, and a teaspoon of vanilla* and pour this over the panful of bread. Let it stand at least an hour, or in refrigerator overnight. Set it in a pan of water in a *350 degree oven* and bake for *45 minutes* to one hour. Serve with *sherry-laced whipped cream*.

Pat White lives in Otisfield, Maine, where she is a free-lance writer. This article is used with permission of the North Conway (N.H.) Irregular.



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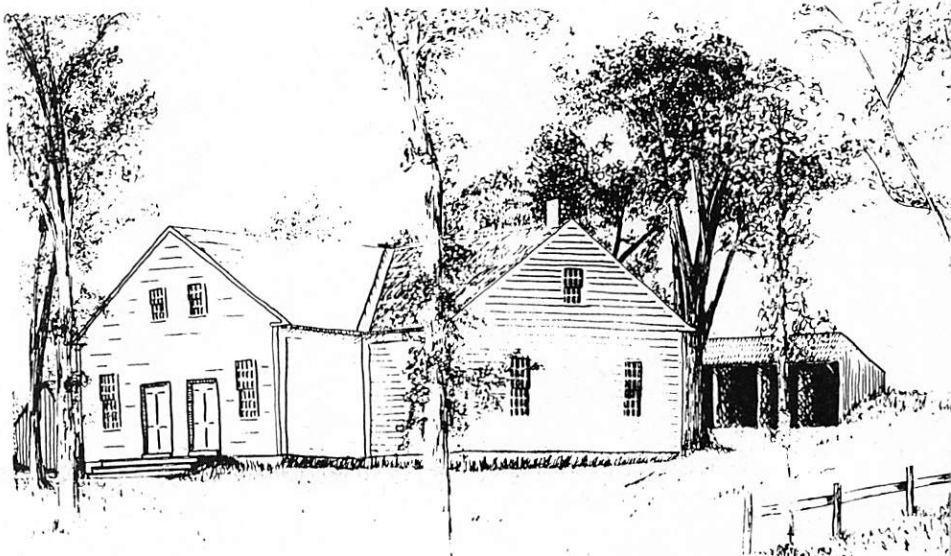
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Artist Betsy Hanscom lives in South Windham,
Maine. She has been a frequent contributor to
BitterSweet.



AT THE COTTAGE by Carol Gestwicki

Life in the Woods Around, or What Was That Noise?

You remember that timid visiting dentist from California who arrived at the cottage in "On Golden Pond"? My suspicion is he had two main concerns—one was whether he might bump into a bear in the dark. And the second—if he was anything like a lot of our guests who are new in the woods—was a concern that he *wouldn't*. Let me explain what I mean.

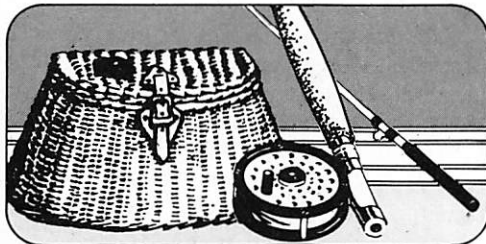
The Maine woods present certain pre-conceived images to those introduced to the area first by the pages of National Geographic or a travel brochure. The rugged lakeshore seems guaranteed to teem with wildlife, especially the larger sorts such as moose, deer and bear. The photographs make it appear unlikely that a visitor could walk a dozen steps without almost colliding with some large, lumbering beast. And our visitors invariably arrive with mixed hopes and fears that we are going to present them immediately with such a spectacle.

Now, I don't want to cast total doubt on these photographic illusions, but I must make it clear that our cottage wildlife normally runs to simpler sorts. Even then, we've had our dramatic moments.

The first creatures we ever met were the raccoons who had waited a long time to have some new humans dumb enough not to tie down the garbage can lids. We were *sure* it was bears when we heard the crash in the night, but discovered only a pair of raccoons who boldly stared back at the flashlight we shone on them. Over the years we've gotten smarter, and the raccoons have gotten so discouraged they hardly ever try our garbage cans anymore. Occasionally we'll hear a bump in the night but we just turn over and go back to sleep. When we get a visitor who really is disappointed he's not seeing some Maine woods life, we know that a fish head left on the beach at night often lures a raccoon down. That's fun, to wait silently in the dark for the "masked bandit" who comes quite suddenly. The one time we tried to

photograph the act, the flash didn't work. But I'll swear that raccoon looked a little put out to have been set up for such an amateur show.

The chipmunks provide limitless pleasure for us all in the woods. We enjoy watching their antics, as well as their careful selection of brown oak leaves, stuffed by the dozen or so into their mouths, then carried off to refurbish a nearby nest. And the "tourists" are delighted to have woods creatures that are both genuinely wild and not too intimidating. They lure them with scraps of bread from a picnic lunch, and then



take pictures of each other feeding a chipmunk out of their hands. But chipmunks provide more exciting moments for them, too. One guest out for a casual stroll came dashing back to the cottage, pale and agitated. "There's a bear out behind your cottage!"

"Really," we said, with mild curiosity, "we've never had one of those."

"No kidding, you should hear the crashing."

When we went back to investigate, the guest cautiously bringing up the rear, we discovered two chipmunks merrily chasing and jumping after each other, and easily sounding as if they weighed 600 pounds or more.

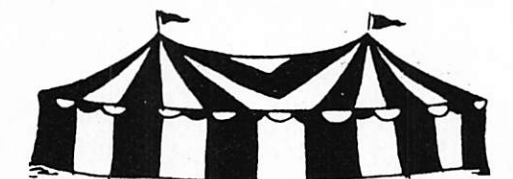
We share the discomfort of most of our visitors in discovering that the slight rustling in the bushes on the beach is being made by a snake. So we are particularly pleased that one boy who visits annually actually likes snakes. We save ours up for him, and then he obliges by transporting them to the opposite side of the lake, never—we hope—to slither our way again. All very fine, except for the year when he thought he'd take one home. On the day of his departure we

took him to the airport, snake in a jar discreetly enclosed in a brown paper bag and in his carry-on bag. Much to our horror, the detection alarm went off as his bag went through the x-ray. We stood holding our breath as the inspector pulled him and his bag aside, zipped open the bag and prepared to examine the contents. The first object he pulled out was the paper bag in question. Our relief as he casually set that aside and dug deeper in the bag was so evident that anyone watching would have thought we were abetting in smuggling diamonds. The inspector found the offending item—a fishing knife in a tackle box—and finally decided it was not intended for evil schemes. He carefully repacked the bag, replacing the hidden snake on top! Now we know that there is a little too much excitement in taking home "live" souvenirs.

We probably get the most mileage out of the frogs. Visitors sitting by the open windows at night speculate on the size of the frogs making those incredible deep sounds. I think most of them are firmly convinced that our frogs are of a size that could easily tackle a bear. It's just as well that the frogs hide themselves so well during the day—I'd hate to destroy some of those imaginings.

Another of our water animals whose tradition is larger than life is the big old grandfather turtle who lurks somewhere in the back pond. People who've gotten a glimpse claim his tail is 12 inches long at least, and covered with green algae from past ages. Fishermen tell tales of having four fish at a time snapped from a leader. I'm kind of glad I've never seen him myself. Not that I disbelieve the stories, but this way my imagination is not bound by reality.

But enough of the small stuff. What becomes a serious obsession with a lot of visitors is seeing a real live moose. Actually, here I'm not being entirely truthful. Most of us living around the lake would be equally grateful for such a sight right here. Oh, we've seen moose other places—amazing in their size and ponderousness, and then astonishing as



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they run and plunge into the water, and even funny as they slurp and guzzle down lily pads. (Eating like a moose has become a catch phrase at our table for gross table manners.) We eagerly collect moose stories every year to savor and then share with visitors. "Well no, I actually have never seen one here—but a friend down the lake saw one swim across just the week before we arrived." "What? No, I've never actually seen one here, but a friend staying with us once saw one in that back cove—two mornings in a row, in fact."

And that, incredibly, is true. Caught up in the beauty of the place, he got up early and went out canoeing. Rounding a curve he came face to face with a large bull moose. He watched until the beast lumbered back into the woods, and then came back to the cottage in great excitement; we were finally convinced that he really had seen a moose. Next morning at the same time he went back to the same spot, sure he'd see the moose again, taking one or two believers along with him. Those of us who'd stayed cozily in our beds were thoroughly chagrined to learn the moose had indeed reappeared on cue. For the rest of that week and summer we faithfully tumbled out of bed and paddled back to check the "moose" cove, but the moose had had his fun, and never appeared there again. Tracks we saw, plenty of tracks, in the mud by the waterfalls, out by the signs in the road, almost as if he were leaving elusive hints. We began to examine the whole area as possible moose sites. "Now there is moose territory if I ever saw any. Look at all those lily pads." We began to jump excitedly every time we saw an oddly shaped stump. But, moose hunt though we did, we came up with a score for those encounters of Moose 2, People definitely 0.

But, do you know, I'm kind of glad about that. One of the nice things about cottage life is the knowledge that, for a couple of months at least, we are able to share the woods of the wild creatures. We're the strangers, on their very familiar territory.

Listen! Did you hear that? Now what do you suppose made *that* noise?

Mrs. Gestwicki spends summers at her cottage on Five Kezars, in Maine.

READERS' ROOM

"Critters"

The Snake in the Cellar

Our first summer on the mountain in Greenwood was, in some ways, a difficult time, with a lot of hard work. The farmhouse had not been lived in for many years when we discovered it. The population of the area which, we were told by many, had been the very center of local civilization in the old days had moved to the easier life of the village, abandoning some fine houses and allowing the extensive fields to return to forest. Our house was one of a few still standing, the others fallen in under the onslaught of successive Maine winters. Ours was the last to be abandoned. It had survived because of a sound metal roof which had kept the weather out. It had suffered the depredations of hunters, however, who found it a convenient place to get in out of the cold—and who found it easy to bag panes of glass if not deer—and from the hunger of porcupines. The latter had gotten in through the window panes broken by the former and had nibbled on the wood wherever a salty hand or foot had touched. They had also left behind mounds of traces as reminders of their visits.

Part of our task, therefore, was to hovel out the house before it could be washed out. Parents and children and friends went about the task in good cheer, for, with all the low morale caused by the mementoes of hunters and porcupines, we took pleasure in the house itself. It was clear that years before it had been the object of loving care and we promised it would be again. Also, it was set in an idyllic spot: on the side of a small mountain with a 180 degree view of the surrounding hills and mountains. One of the friends who was with us on that memorable day when we had discovered it remarked that it reminded him of the setting of *Heidi*, which he had read as a boy.

That first summer we had many visitors. Although we were on a road that really led nowhere, since it was discontinued up the mountain beyond our place, quite a few drove as far as our house and turned around for the journey back down the mountain. The slightest bit of encouragement from us, however, would lead to socializing. Most of the people were from the area, possibly curious to observe the eccentric people who would seek to make livable again an abandoned house without electricity, with a questionable water supply, and on a nearly impassable road. When they discovered we were no crazier than most, they regaled us with stories of the town's past. They pointed to the surrounding peaks, naming each mountain. It soon became obvious to us that local usage did not necessarily conform to the topographical maps we had so eagerly purchased. Also, the names of the mountains often changed with the teller. These new acquaintances particularly delighted in informing us that the sunken place on what we chose to call the front lawn was the old stage coach road that ran from Portland to Berlin, New Hampshire, over these mountains. We began to take pride in that fact and became quite possessive about it, as if it made our much-loved house a very special place. You can imagine the umbrage we took when one day we were visiting folks on a neighboring mountain and they told us that the sunken place at *their* feet was the old stage coach road from Portland to Berlin. We, of course, were much too polite to tell them they had been misinformed.

One mid-morning that first summer we heard the whirr of a motor that always preceded the appearance of visitors around the bend. Up drove a pickup truck of a fairly beat variety. We emerged from the house, happy to knock off

work for awhile and to welcome guests bearing more local lore. This time out climbed three young men in jeans, or what we then called dungarees. They wore them rolled up once, as was the style at the time. They were also sporting multi-colored shirts, which gave them a Country Western aura. One of the fellas immediately emerged as the spokesman of the group. After the usual preliminaries about how quiet and remote and beautiful a spot this was, he informed us that he had been through the house a year or so before. That, he explained, was when everyone climbed through the broken window on the front porch. With a look of great concern, he asked whether we had as yet been down into the cellar. "No," I replied, "not since last year when we purchased the place." He responded, with eyes perceptively wider, that, when he had gone down into the cellar, he had discovered that "a big snake" lived there. Before I could express my doubts, he, displaying obvious worry over our safety, reached into the cab of his truck and pulled out a long-barreled pistol and proceeded to check the ammunition in his pocket. He suggested we visit the cellar together.

It is true that, with all of the work we had to do above ground, we had not paid any attention to the cellar since we had moved in. I had visited it, of course, when we were trying to make a decision on whether to purchase such a remote, abandoned place. I had done all of the obligatory things I had been told one does: inspected the foundation and the sills, driven a pen knife into the joists which looked damp but proved reasonably sound, had admired the bins in which the residents of yore had stored their vegetables in the winter, and had been particularly awed by the size of the stones that had been fitted together so

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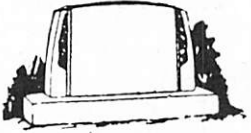


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expertly to form the arches which supported the fireplace and chimney above.

Now, this very serious young man was informing us of the possibility that there was, unbeknownst to us, a viper in our midst. I looked properly sober, less at the news of a possible "big snake" in our cellar than at the thought that the gun he was carrying was a dangerous weapon. I knew he wanted to be helpful. I just hoped he knew what he was doing. Opening the cellar door, I reminded him that the stairs had fallen in and that we would have to ease ourselves down into the basement by stepping down onto one of the vegetable bins. As we hit bottom, he would move no further without protection. He drew from his pocket a bullet and inserted it in the firing chamber of his long-nosed pistol. Now we were prepared for the big game hunt. He was wide-eyed as we carefully trod the dirt floor; I, I am sorry to report, was skeptical, but properly considerate of his feelings. Around the corner of the big arch we went. I breathed a sigh of relief: no snake to be seen.

I think he was disappointed. But, he need not have been. For he had properly impressed us all by his heroic stature, especially my two young daughters. (I have sometimes regretted that my son was still a babe-in-arms and, therefore, missed out on this big adventure.) Actually, I discovered later that there are many snakes around the place, something one comes to expect on property with a barn and other outbuildings, and some of them grow to a size to command respect. But we were not aware of them then. I have even come to concede over the years that maybe there was a big snake in the cellar on the day the young man first visited the abandoned house: It could easily have used a hole in the upper foundation as a resting place. My skepticism was, no doubt, misplaced.

The young man unloaded his pistol as we emerged into the bright sun. He carefully placed the bullet back in the pocket of his dungarees and put the gun back into the truck. As we stood on the lawn, with me profusely thanking him

for his concern over our welfare, we looked off to the mountains in the distance and I was able to demonstrate my expertise by naming the most prominent peaks. It was then that he remarked, not quite casually, that he had been told that "there was a fella writing stories up on the mountain." I looked doubtful and said I didn't think so. He looked disappointed. Shortly after, he and his friends drove down the mountain again and out of our lives.

Ever since the second half of the last century, when history like most disciplines was labelled by its practitioners a "science," historians have taken themselves much too seriously. A present-day historian, such as myself, does not like to think of himself as telling "stories." A social scientist, yes; a storyteller, no! So, when the young man informed me that he had been told that there was a fella up on the mountain who wrote stories, it never would have occurred to me that he meant me. I now realize, however, that the word must have been going around—in obviously distorted form, as the word usually does—that the fella on the mountain wrote stories. I must have been some sort of celebrity in the eyes of these young fellows, but I was not quick enough to see it then. It was only some time later that I finally suspected what the real purpose of that fascinating visit had been: the young man wanted to be written into one of my "stories." Well, it has only taken me twenty years, but at last he has gotten his wish.

Ernest Cassara
Fairfax, Virginia & Greenwood, Maine

A Black Bear in June

My husband Robert and I live in Dayton, Maine, seven miles up the Saco River from the twin cities of Biddeford and Saco. Our son Robert Jr., his wife Joan, and their three children, have their home below us, beyond the barn and family garden. At the end of the garden, an overgrown raspberry patch borders a thick growth of pines.

Each year in berry-picking season



Joan insists a bear picks our raspberries. She has seen paw-prints, trampled bushes, and scattered berries on ground.

No one believes her. Joan believes; so thoroughly, she always bangs her berry pail on entering the patch of head-high bushes. She shouts, "O.K. Mr. Bear, you've had your turn. Now, I'm coming to pick my share!"

One June morning, Joan awakened before the family. She looked out the window to check the weather; a lovely rosy dawn. Also, there was Mr. Black Bear ambling toward the newly planted asparagus roots. The ground was soft, the roots easily dug. Mr. Bear was eating asparagus roots with grunts of satisfaction.

Joan woke the rest of the family to prove a bear lived in our piney wood (where the children built their tree house); and foraged the Cole garden.

Saturday morning, the family gathered at our home for breakfast. Joan told us about Mr. Bear. Number two son Peter said to number one son Stephen, "O.K. How much did you pay for the bear suit?" Laughter broke up the party. The boys, with their sister Martha, rushed through breakfast to dash to the garden. There they checked the trail of paw-prints and newly-dug holes in the asparagus bed.

Joan's imaginary bear tale has come true. There are paw-prints to prove her story.

When my husband goes to the garden, I say, "Please take this police whistle to warn Mr. Bear to stay in his piney wood. It's your turn to harvest the asparagus."

*Dorothy Cole
Vernon, Vermont*

Bats In Your Belfry? (An Apologia)

Chances are you don't have a belfry. But you may have an attic, a barn, or a garage, where bats have taken up residence. Perhaps you may even have them in your house. And it is a rare person who willingly shares his home with bats. The problem is: What to do about them?

Before you call in an exterminator to destroy the bats, which can be costly and inadvisable, perhaps you would like to know more about these creatures surrounded with so much superstition. Throughout the ages, bats have been associated with tales of vampires and haunted houses, and who has not heard the expression "like a bat out of hell"?

True, there are vampire bats. Let's consider these first—the bad news before the good. Sanguivorous (blood-sucking) bats are found in Central and South America. And they do feed exclusively on the blood of warm-blooded animals, usually cattle or horses, chickens, and sometimes even human beings.

The vampire bats are well equipped for their foraging with needle-sharp incisors and canines. With these they make a small incision where the skin is thin and has many blood vessels, such as around the neck, the face, or the anal area. They do not, however, suck the blood but merely lap it up as it oozes from the wound. Human beings have been known to sleep through this apparently painless operation, becoming aware of it only the next morning when they find blood seeping from the wound on a toe or perhaps the nose. Saliva from the bat's mouth has trickled down its tongue, entering the wound. This saliva contains an anti-coagulant which

retards clotting; thus the continued flow of blood even the next morning.

Vampire bats have been known to return several nights in succession to the same victims. They usually do not alight on their intended victims but land on the ground or floor and walk or hop to their feast. They may consume blood up to one and a half times their own weight in a matter of a couple of hours.

However, assuming you do not live in Central or South America, you need lose no sleep over the vampire bat.

Then there are the carnivorous bats that live in Africa, Asia and the tropics of Australia. They eat small rodents, frogs, birds and even their own kind. The largest American bat, a native of South America, with a wingspread of three feet, enjoys the same diet as these other carnivore.

In Baja California and Mexico, as well as Central and South America, are found the piscivorous, or fish-eating bats. They have long hooked claws with which they scoop fish from the water. It is believed they use echolocation to detect the ripples on the surface of the water caused by the fish. If, by chance, an occasional bat falls into the water in the process of catching its meal, that is no problem, for bats can swim.

Also in the tropics are the frugivorous, or fruit-eating, bats. They locate the soft ripe fruit they feed on by its smell and have even been known to enter houses to raid a fruit bowl.

Now the good news! The bats with which we are concerned are the insectivorous, or insect-eating, bats, and more particularly, the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) of North America. It belongs to the most widespread family of bats representing 70% of the bat species.

The head and body of the little brown bat are about the size of a small mouse. The ears are upright and contain a leaf-like formation called the tragus which presumably contributes to the bat's acute hearing.

The wings are the feature that distinguishes bats from all other mammals. They contain bones similar to the bones of our hands except that the extremely

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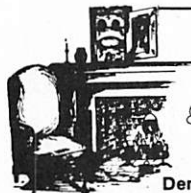
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long fingers are about the same length as the forearm. They are connected to each other and to the forearm by a membrane which stretches to the ankles and tail. There the membrane forms a pouch which can be used to hold prey for later feasting. The thumb is free and used in grasping. The membrane forming the wings is hairless and very thin but tough. If damaged, it can repair itself.

The hind legs, though not muscular, are strong and can support the weight of the bat when it hangs upside down in its normal resting position. The bat's weight causes the tendons in its legs to pull the toes into a tight grip, thus assuring a secure hold while the bat is sleeping. When the bat is suspended from its roost, the wings are folded in close to the body.

The canine teeth in the little brown bat are used to seize and crush its prey but in size they are infinitely smaller than those used in the ghoulish forays of the sanguivorous bats. It is doubtful if they could bite anything larger than night-flying insects. The little brown bat, it is estimated, can individually catch up to 500 insects in an hour. Flying with its mouth open, the bat may take in swarms of tiny insects in much the same fashion as a whale strains plankton from sea water. Larger insects are detected by echolocation.

Bats in their forays have been known to fly at speeds of 20 to 30 miles an hour and even faster when diving or with a tail wind.

As the weather gets colder and the insects disappear, the little brown bat prepares to hibernate. Once in the state of hibernation, it cannot protect itself, so it must find a place safe from marauders. It must also find a place with the proper humidity as the bare membrane of its wings would dessicate if it became too dry. Its hibernaculum may be caves, crevices in trees, woodpecker holes, cellars, or even unused chimneys. The bats often hibernate in clusters which provide a measure of warmth and thus may retard the metabolism of their summer accumulation of fat. They may be disturbed in their hibernation by a

change in the weather or by unusual noise.

In the spring the females cluster together in a nursing colony where they produce their young, usually only one offspring a season. To deliver her infant the female reverses her normal roosting position so as to face upwards. Then she curls the tail membrane forward into a pouch to receive the infant. The young bat emerges squeaking and immediately scrambles over its mother, attaching itself to her body under the wing, and then nurses. When the mothers must forage for food, the infants are left where they may huddle together to keep warm and this is when their cries may be heard. As they grow older the cries become ultrasonic. At about three weeks of age, the tiny bats try out their wings.

Now, while you may agree that bats are very important in the ecological scheme of things, you may still have reservations about their habitats, especially if they coincide with yours. And, undoubtedly, you may have heard that bats can spread rabies. So can foxes, raccoons, skunks and other animals. But, on the remote chance of our contracting rabies from any of these creatures, should we embark on a course of extermination?

I considered that a number of years ago when a colony of bats took up residence in our barn where we had sheep. My concern was that the droppings of the bats—which, incidentally, resemble mouse droppings—might contaminate the hay and other feed given to our sheep. I wrote to the State Department of Health and Welfare and inquired of them what to do to get rid of the bats. I received a letter suggesting that I put mothballs around to disperse the bats. Using mothballs was not feasible in our case since the barn was very large. An exterminator wanted \$200 at that time, which we didn't have—and for which I am now grateful. Then a more interesting solution was offered by a biology professor: Just leave the lights on for a few nights a week. And we did that, and the bats moved; not far, but they were no longer a nuisance. Now, we have a colony in a former cooper shop where

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THINKING OF COUNTRY THINGS by John Meader

BATS

A steady flutter of wings seems to fill the room. I struggle to go on sleeping. For it is something like five a.m. and we've been up 'til midnight with guests. What is this flutter?

Outside the near window one of our cats makes preliminary queries about the time and place of breakfast. A song sparrow practices. Our rooster, Phil, is crowing back at his own echo off the neighbor's barn. But it is the flutter that intrudes.

I blink one eye open—the kind of blink one likes to think won't really trip the switch and throw one into the waking world. At five a.m. on Sunday, let the birds run things.

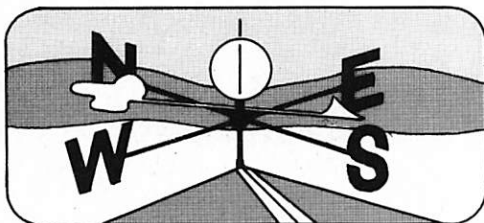
A bat produces the fluttering. Our bedroom door is shut and the open windows are screened. The bat flies the length of the room, sixteen feet, turns, and then flies back at an elevation of about a foot below the eight-foot ceiling.

From this point the morning goes rapidly downhill. Why is it, I wonder, that a full-grown man all of six feet and more, and one hundred and ninety pounds and sometimes more, should suddenly feel a prickle of danger and a pulse of adrenalin when faced by a bat? It weighs only a couple of ounces and much of that is thin suede draped over balsa wood. A bat is a small flying umbrella piloted by a mouse.

I immediately slip from bed, keeping my head down, of course, and scoot to the window, from which I remove the screen. Then I depart the room. Bat will (somehow) spot the exit and duly exit through it, to go wherever it usually,

properly, hangs out at this uncivilized hour. I will let in the cat, and that will be that.

Wrong. I have just let in the cat, who turns out to be Walter, the grey and



white tom. Then I hear from the bedroom my name being called in what I hear as pure terror. It is Pat. Naturally, one knows what she has discovered—the bat. Bat has not yet found the exit. Drat.

Cautiously, I open the door and poke in my head. Pat is huddled under blankets and pillows. "There's a bat in here," she says. "I know," I reply in a voice of all-knowing. I am The Farmer. The Farmer *knows*. The bat swoops toward the door. The Farmer hurriedly retrieves his head and shuts the door.

A voice, still terrified, is heard to plead, "Do something." Walter has come loping over. He and I have done some mousing together and this must appear to him to be another such joyous occasion. He tangles in my legs. So I open the door again a crack, in order to relay to Pat that I've removed a screen to free the bat. But Pat doesn't regard this as the prompt and total solution that alone could suffice. "Do something," she repeats. The bat again heads for my head. Walter crouches and starts to sing his hunt song. Cat. Pat. Bat. Drat.

My retreat is, of course, intended to gain time to think. But thinking isn't happening. I have left the door ajar. Now the bat appears at its top, wriggling through the crack—a very small bat, but now it is taking on dimensions. As it slithers over the door, the scene could have been cut from a very low-budget horror film.

Walter apparently likes this kind of movie, for he commences to leap at the door, singing. The bat utters some squeaks of gibberish. Pat pleads. The Farmer grabs a broom and irrationally gives a swipe at the bat. And of all surprises I kill the bat, with one fell swipe.

Well, drat again. I didn't want to kill the bat. Indeed, we had a bat in the kitchen once, and on that occasion I sensibly caught and freed the creature unharmed. They're harmless.* They catch insects. Why kill an innocent thing just because it made a mistake and couldn't find its way home?

Bat, wherever you are, I regret our meeting. It was wild for a while, and funny to think back on, but next time I hope I do better. Right now I'm batting .500, whether that is good or bad.

P.S. Since writing this I have learned of a survey taken to determine the ten things we humans most fear in the course of going through our everyday lives. First on the list, not surprising when one thinks of it, is public speaking. Number ten is bats.

**The editor reminds writer and reader that, while most bats may be harmless, this is the season to watch out for rabid bats.*

... Longfellow's Childhood

British at Castine; his stories about Indians and Indian lore; and an encounter in 1728 between Captain Lovewell and his small band of brave men with the Indians at the head of what is today Lovewell's Pond in Fryeburg. At the age of thirteen, Henry recorded his viewpoint of the engagement in "The Battle of Lovewell's Pond," which was printed in the "Poet's Corner" of the *Portland Gazette*, November 17, 1820, and is thought to be his first published poem. Later it was included in his first published collection of poems, *Voice of the Night*, published in 1839.

Of all the places with which Longfellow is associated in Maine, the crystal waters of Sebago and connecting streams certainly must be considered as one of his favorite haunts. It is said that, as a child, he played along the gray granite monolith known today as Frye's Leap.

There was another little boy who also came here to play and to conjure up romantic tales. There is no evidence that the two met in this solitary wilderness, but they would be classmates at

Bowdoin, and Longfellow would write the poem that eulogized him at his funeral at the Unitarian Church in Concord, Massachusetts, on May 22, 1864. His name was Nathaniel Hawthorne.

During his Cambridge Years, the poet frequently visited his home in Portland. When he did, he invariably made excursions with his friends and relatives to Sebago, up the Songo, and to Long Pond (Long Lake). His last visit was in the summer of 1881, less than a year before his death.

No positive evidence has come to light (to my knowledge) that Longfellow ever traveled by way of the Cumberland and Oxford Canal, but there are rumors that he did. He did, however, enjoy a steamboat ride up the Songo during the lovely fall of 1875, after the closing of the canal. Among the archives of the Bridgton Public Library is the register of the famous Bridgton House. The following was entered on September 14, 1875: "H.W. Longfellow, Cambridge, Mass., and Misses Longfellow, Samuel Longfellow, Cambridge, and Mrs. Anne Pierce, Portland." So impressed was the poet with the pristine beauty of the serpentine Songo that he sat down on September 18 and wrote the poem, "The Songo."

*Nowhere such a devious stream,
Save in fancy or in dream,
Winding slow through bush and
brake,
Flows the stream, so still and slow
That it hardly seems to flow.*

It was apparently Longfellow's intention to write a long epic poem about Sebago Lake, but unfortunately he did not follow through with his plan.

William Cullen Bryant, Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Edgar Allen Poe, and Charles Brockden Brown proved to the world that there were Americans who could write something worth reading. They were the pioneers, so to speak, in American literature. Of the group, only Cooper was financially successful as a writer, and then he had income from property. One can understand why Longfellow's father was nonplussed when his son informed him that

he wanted to make a career of writing. His father was correct in saying at the time that no one made a living from writing. His mother, Zilpah, was far more sympathetic to her gifted son's ambition. But then, she was such a connoisseur of the arts.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow lived a long and successful life, although certainly not without tragic moments. During his lifetime many changes transpired in the city of his birth, as he indicated in 1858 when he wrote the poem "Changed"—inspired by a walk he had taken after church with his old Bowdoin classmate William Pitt Fessenden, November 25, 1847.

*From the outskirts of the town,
Where of old the mile-stone
stood,
Now a stranger, looking down,
I behold the shadowy crown
Of the dark and haunted wood.
Is it changed, or am I changed?
Ah! the oaks are fresh and
green
But the friends of whom I ranged
Through their thickets are
estranged
By the years that intervene.
Bright as ever flows the sea,
Bright as ever shines the sun,
But alas! they seem to me
Not the sun that used to be,
Not the tides that used to run.*

Despite the many changes, there is much of Longfellow's world that still remains. Although his old home is sandwiched between tall buildings and there is a constant flow of traffic of an automobile age that he, perhaps fortunately, did not live to see, he would be delighted to stroll from room to room in his boyhood home and find that it has been kept just as it was left to the Maine Historical Society by his sister Ann. Except for Whittier, few literary giants could return and find their family heritage so well preserved. The first spinner piano ever to be brought to Portland is there in the parlor. The wrought iron tongs forged by his great-great grandfather in Newbury stand by the spacious fireplace in the kitchen. The bed in his



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room on the third floor seems to be waiting his return. He would be delighted to see his desk where he sat writing the little poem, "The Rainy Day," in front of the window that looks out at the line that "still clings to the mouldering wall."

And if he were to journey out to Gorham, he would find that Judge Longfellow's farm, the birthplace of his father, has not fallen victim to urban sprawl and is still being operated as a dairy farm.

Time and technology have altered but little the halcyon setting of General Wadsworth's farm. The River Road that parallels the Saco River has recently been paved, but not the narrow road that is lined by towering pine and gnarled red oaks, some of which were mute witnesses to the joyful arrival of the poet and his mother to Wadsworth Hall so long ago. Up on the mountain his uncle's farm has long since vanished. The terrible fire of 1947 and nature have obliterated almost all vestiges of what was once prosperous farm land. But the old general's sprawling set of farm buildings still remain in the valley. Moreover, it is still owned and lived in by proud descendants of the general and the poet. The three front rooms, which include the room in which the poet slept, are still maintained, although there are only a few of the poet's or the general's possessions still extant. But the pride of the Wadsworth-Longfellow heritage is there, and the town of Hiram is still very much Wadsworth country—proud of its direct link with one of the world's great literary figures.



. Longfellow Poems

The Children's Hour

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
The grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.



A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,

Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away!



A Psalm of Life

What the Young Man Said to the Psalmist

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!—
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, how'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.



... Bats In Belfry

the bats cluster in the large unused chimney. We can see them emerging at dusk and flying into the nearby woods. Later, by the light of the post lantern, we can watch their forays.

Recently my nephew encountered a bat problem which was financially embarrassing to him. He had rented his lake cottage. The second day the tenants were there, the lady telephoned and said accusingly, "There were two bats in the house last night! We are moving out." And they did.

So what was he to do? He tried various methods of removing the bats, all without success. They were in the walls of the house so leaving the lights on had no effect. He then heard about an electronic device that was on the market. It emits a high frequency sound that can be heard, presumably, only by the bats and various other creatures. My nephew is not sure that it has been entirely effective as yet but that's a device you could consider if bats are your problem.

However, the mere presence of bats should not be sufficient reason to consider dispersing or destroying them. Their existence is already being threatened by the loss of proper habitats and hibernacula. Man's use of insecticides not only kills insects but may damage the health and endanger the lives of the bats who ingest the insects.

The little brown bat deserves a place in our environment. Let us hope that its contribution to our well-being will be recognized and appreciated before it is faced with extinction.

*Faustina Chamberlain
West Baldwin, Maine*

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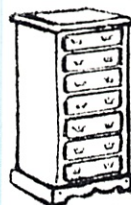
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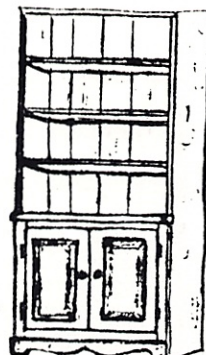
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